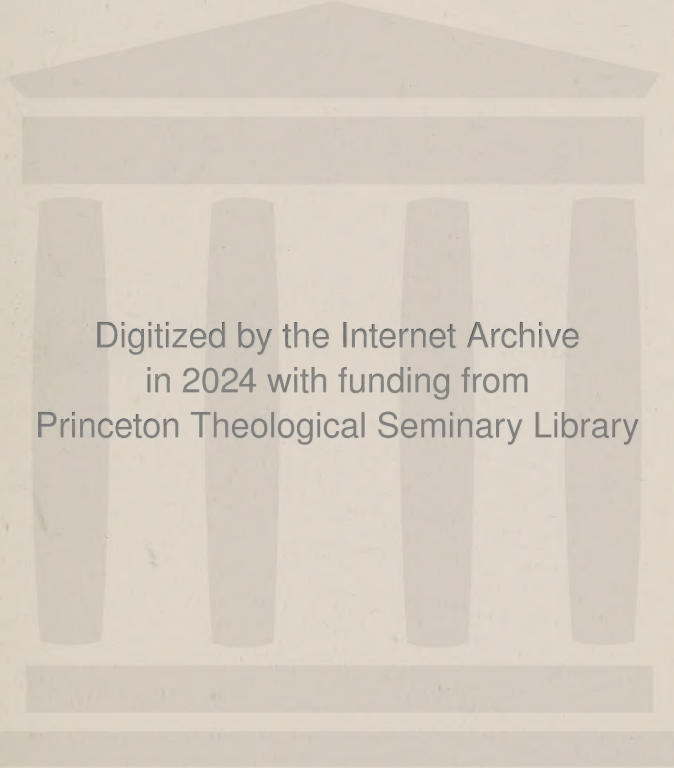


ND653
R4B2

REMBRANDT AND SPINOZA



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024 with funding from
Princeton Theological Seminary Library



Rembrandt's Self portrait of 1661. Ryksmuseum Amsterdam.

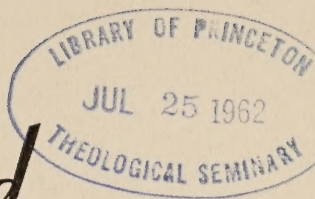
Rembrandt and Spinoza

by

✓
LEO BALET



PHILOSOPHICAL LIBRARY
New York



Copyright 1962 by PHILOSOPHICAL LIBRARY, INC.

15 East 40th Street, New York 16, N. Y.

All rights reserved

Library of Congress Catalog Card No. 61-18686

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

To
MY WIFE
KATE BALET

CONTENTS

PREFACE	ix
THE AGE OF INDIVIDUALISM 1150-1950	1
ABSOLUTISM IN WESTERN EUROPE 1550-1750	10
COURT ART IN THE ABSOLUTIST COUNTRIES 1550-1750	13
HOLLAND IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY	33
1. Apostasy from Rome	35
2. Revolution against Spain	44
HOLLAND IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY	51
1. Economy	51
2. Society	55
3. Government	62
4. Law	66
5. Politics	69
6. Morale	72
7. Science	88
SPINOZA'S PHILOSOPHY	93
1. Alteration in 1656	93
2. Spinoza's life	103
3. Materialist monism: oneness and sameness of body and soul	108
4. Affectology	113
5. Religious atheism	118
6. Intuition	122
7. Functional style	123

CONTENTS (*continued*)

ARTS IN HOLLAND	126
1. Arts in general	126
2. Formalist painting and literature	132
3. Realist painting and literature	141
a. Portraits	145
b. Interieurs	151
c. Exterieurs	161
REMBRANDT'S ART	167
1. Rembrandt's life	167
2. Attitude toward the supernatural	169
3. Alteration about 1635	178
4. Relation to time	181
5. Relation to man	186
6. Pre-cognitive consciousness	188
7. Functionalism in colors, light and composition	190
Bibliography of Spinoza	212
Bibliography of Rembrandt	213
Notes	215

P R E F A C E

The book in hand is the result of a lifetime of Rembrandt research which pursued new lines of approach (i.a. the philosophy of Spinoza, the ultra-realistic literature of Constantine Huygens, the functionalism of Simon Stevin and the philosophy of Rembrandt himself, which amounts to a rabid anti-aestheticism) and which applied the totalistic method of Blaise Pascal, so that what finally emerged out of the haze of the author's intuition and his critical reflections was quite another, more inclusive Rembrandt than the familiar one of the German factualists and specialists.

The book has a twofold aim: first, to widen our knowledge of Rembrandt and to deepen our comprehension of his master-works; and second, to demonstrate once more the superiority of the French totalist to the German specialist method of art history.

In Fragment 72 of his "Pensées" (ed. Brunsvieg) Pascal starts from the axiom that the most essential relation between two things is the one between the whole and its parts. The axiom is so self evident that it can be negated only by those whom God has stupefied to their perdition: "*Quos vult perdere, Jupiter dementat!*" Pascal infers from the axiom that it is impossible to know and to comprehend a whole "without knowing and comprehending its parts, as it is impossible to know and comprehend a part without knowledge and comprehension of the whole!" The march of Science thus has to be a perpetual oscillation between the whole and the parts. Is this not a vicious circle? No! It would be a "*petitio principii*" if science did nothing but turn around *on the same spot*. Science, however, progresses steadily, because not only the parts among each other, but also the whole and the parts, are interrevelatory and intercorrective.

The crux of the totalist method is that it cannot be applied without dialectics, for the following reason: Every whole is at the same time a part of a more comprehensive whole and so ad infinitum. In the same way is every part at the same time a

whole of smaller parts and so again ad infinitum. Science will never reach the absolute whole, nor the last particle, which is, of course, the evolutionary energy of the Universe. The truth, thus, cannot be found *at the end* of the way but only *on* the way of knowing, which is an infinite approximation to the Absolute. The whole is always present in each of its parts as its sense and its destiny. This is, of course, the retotalization of the whole that has been only provisionally detotalized for the sake of knowledge.

L. B.

THE AGE OF INDIVIDUALISM: 1150-1950

The age that "began" in the twelfth century and lasted till in our days, is generally called the "Modern Age." This name is, first, a platitude, because every age is at its beginning a modern age; and, second, it was modern only for a relatively short time. Its modernity was doomed to become more and more nonsensical, the older the age grew. The definition "Age of Individualism" seems to have more sense. Herewith not only the general character of the so-called "Modern Age" has been precised but even the distinctive character of the preceding, and the distinctive character of the age which for the moment is in progress. The period before 1150 was an age of totalism, thus the opposite of individualism; and when our age of individualism will have wilted away, the future age can be nothing but another age of totalism; the latter, of course, different from the one from 800 until 1150, which was religious. Our totalism will be a totalism of matter. So far as for the qualification "modern."

The words "age," "era," "epoch," "period," etc. which we are obliged to keep using till we have at our disposal a new terminology more appropriate to the modern method of history,—need too some clarification.

In reality there are no "periods." There is only a continuity of change. All happenings are interrelated, and all processes of happenings form together one great process. Past life is virtually one happening.

This one happening, however, is so infinitely complicate that no finite mind will ever be able to comprehend it in its wholeness. Historians are, therefore, obliged to break it up, but only provisionally and with the strict obligation to reintegrate the original whole as soon as the mental disintegration has fulfilled its objective. So the historian has to draw lines which do not indicate

the beginning and the end of a thing, but solely the beginning and the end of his thinking a thing that always was and always will be, although eventually in a hardly recognizable form.

The art historians have hypostatized these lines, in other words, they have made out of these lines real modes of existing of single processes of happenings. But God punished them, as he punished the people of Babel when he spoke: "Wohlauf, lasset uns niederfahren und ihre Sprache daselbst verwirren, dass keiner des anderen Sprache verstehe" (Untranslated lest it might hurt the peculiar idiom of the German God)! If there were periods in reality, it would certainly have been possible to fix their beginnings and their ends. What has been the result of the attempts to periodize? The opinions of the art historians, for instance, about the beginning of the so-called "Middle Ages" differ among each other as much as for seven hundred and fifty years. We face the same jumble in reference to the end of the "Middle Ages." Here their opinions differ only for four hundred years. So the Babelry has come true, nowadays every art historian speaks another language and "keiner versteht des anderen Sprache." There is nothing that disproves the existence of periods more than the confusion in the fixation of their beginnings and ends. For all that, the periodization goes on steadily and lustily.

So when in this book the official terminology is still used, then by "period" is only meant a phase in a continuum of change. In all ages of totalism there is individualism, in all ages of individualism there is totalism. The difference is only that at times one of the two comes more to the fore.

The totalism from the ninth till the twelfth century was the implication of the contingency and coincidence of a series of events. After the death of Mohammed, in 632, the Moslems began their invasions and conquered at last the whole of the Mediterranean world with the exception of the greater part of the Byzantine Empire. At the end of the eighth century the oversea communication between Orient and Occident was totally disrupted and, as bad luck goes in runs, about the same time the overland-route through the valley of the Danube was blocked by the invasions of the Avars, and in the next century, by the Magyars. In the North of Europe the destruction by the Norsemen of

Dorestad, the trade center in the North, had paralyzed all business intercourse between the Netherlands, England, France, and the Scandinavian countries. From 800 on the only riches were landed property. Since all cultivable land was in the hands of the nobles and the Church, the former merchants and artisans were obliged to leave the towns and join one or another agricultural collective in the country.

The man who most suffered under the unfavorable circumstances was Charlemagne (768-814). He could no longer pay his officials and was thus obliged to compensate them with the cession for life-time of the territories that they administered. The officials took, of course, advantage of the penury of their king, and made themselves independent and their domains hereditary. The kingdom of the Franks began to crumble down. Charles finally realized that his sovereignty could be saved only by a higher, thus, divine authority. So he placed his kingdom in the hands of the Pope, who thereupon appointed him his, and herewith, God's representative in worldly affairs, and crowned him, on December 24, 800, to Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.¹ The material order, became herewith an *Hierarchical Order*. The State was henceforward theocratic (at least theoretically); society a Communion Sanctorum; the law of the State exclusively canon law; philosophy and science theology; the arts religious, in other words an institution for the work of salvation.

But soon the embittered struggle began in Western Europe for the recuperation of all that was lost. In the eleventh century the Mohammedans were successively repelled from Spain, the South of France, and the islands Corsica, Sardinia, and Sicily. And the Crusades, which were virtually the continuation of all the private enterprises of the Italian towns to restore trade, brought the Christians into the possession of the Holy Land, and the Italians into the possession of the Syrian ports. In the mean time, the Norsemen in England, France, and Italy, had converted to Christianity; from pirates they had become tame Christian merchants. Everywhere trade revived and the new individualist form of economy with private property and private profit, urged even agriculture to adapt itself to the exigencies of modern life, in other words, to individualization and commercialization.

The twelfth century was the age of the breakdown of the Hierarchical order. The flight from the country to the towns was one of its most significant manifestations. But the new class of the burghers who still believed in God, realized that they acted against God's will who had authorized and sanctified the old state of affairs. Besides the Church did not stop weathering against trade, which was in the eyes of the clergy usury, and against the "pestiferous" communes, and the rebellious and god-forsaken burghers. The latter tried to acquiesce their bad conscience by professing and carrying through a radical separation of the material from the spiritual, the natural from the supernatural, and the rational from the irrational. God remained for them absolute, in so far as the spiritual, supernatural, and irrational were concerned; natural things, however, did no longer come under divine or ecclesiastical jurisdiction, they found their justification in themselves and were ruled by natural laws.

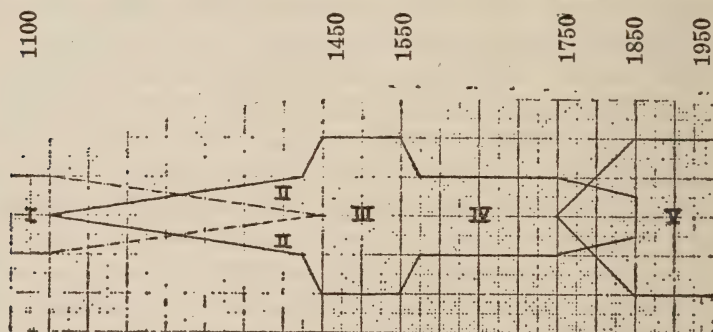
The individualization of life was, thus, eo ipso a secularization. The States emancipated themselves from Rome. After the discovery of the *Corpus juris Romanum* in the library of the University of Bologna, civil law replaced ecclesiastical law in the chancelleries of the States and at the Universities. The knights gave up the former God service,—so masterly depicted in the Chansons de geste, which were in fact sacred literature,—and consecrated their lives henceforward to Love Service (Minnedienst). The court romances were the most eloquent expression of the secularization of the life of the nobles. Woman was now no longer just an instrument in God's world plan for the propagation of mankind, which amounted to the procreation of an ever greater number of worshippers. Love became free. Héloïse was the first woman of the new era: she loved without the unclean feeling of sinfulness. The burghers who had rebelled in the towns against the government of the bishops built everywhere the most magnificent cathedrals as the monuments of their civic pride and their political freedom. The new churches were factually churches against the Church. The liturgical dramas developed in the twelfth century into profane dramas, comedies, and farces, the Church hymns into the impudent Carmina Burana, the stories of the Bible and the Saints into the lascivious fabliaux.

The individualization and secularization did not make halt even before the precinct of the Church. Mysticism had no longer a collectivist basis. It became individualist by professing that the mystic union with the divine was more essential for the salvation than the means of grace of the Church. Some mystics even considered the Church as an obstacle to the "unio mystica." In the twelfth, not in the sixteenth century, began the Reformation. Everywhere thousands and thousands of the most devoted men and women separated from the religious collective, reneged its means of grace and the mediation of the priest. Even Jesus Christ was humanized, and secularized to a certain extent. Before 1150, he was represented as God, enthroned on the cross, because a God cannot suffer. After 1150, Christ was nailed to the cross and suffering as a human being. In the early sculptures and paintings the Jesus child was represented as God, dressed, enthroned on the lap of his mother, and blessing the faithful who prayed to him; in the later representations he was just a child, naked, playing with trifles, a bird, a fruit, his big toe, without being the least concerned with the crowd that kneeled before his statue. Mary had been during the former centuries the Theotokos, thus a mere instrument in the work of salvation; in the twelfth century she was just the most beautiful and most lovely of all earthly mothers. In the twelfth century philosophy and science divorced from theology and went henceforth their own way, unconcerned with the Church. Finally, art ceased to be spiritual. Architecture, sculpture, painting, literature, and music desupernaturalized and thus renaturalized.

I should like to present the new age of individualism in a scheme, although I know that all schemes are bad. They cannot but be bad, because life cannot be pressed into a scheme. All schemes are, therefore, generalizations and oversimplifications. It is true, a scheme may be improved by adding all kind of distinctions, differentiations, overlappings, exceptions, exceptions of exceptions, etc. but then it is no longer a scheme. I just want a scheme to show an initial direction through a jungle of facts, however bad the scheme may be.

From the twelfth to the middle of the fifteenth century, there were two currents. Through the crescendo sign I have indicated that burgher individualism was steadily increasing;

through a decrescendo sign that spiritual totalism was on the decline. There can be no question of any causality here; in other words, the diminishing influence of the Church was not the result of the spread of individualism, or vice versa the luxuriating individualism an effect of the wilting-away of the power of the Church. There cannot even be a question of intercausality. The two currents were, in fact, one current. It was the same process seen from different angles.



- I. Religious Totalism
- II. Burgher Individualism
- III. General Hyperindividualism (Renaissance)
- IV. Single Hyperindividualism (Absolutism)
- V. Bourgeois Hyperindividualism

There are a lot of historical facts that substantiate the dwindling influence of the once mighty Church. One of these facts is the struggle between Boniface VIII (1294-1303) and Philip the Fair (1285-1314), King of France, which ended with a defeat of the Pope. Then came the Babylonian Captivity. The Popes resided from 1309 till 1377 no longer in Rome but in Avignon where they were virtually the prisoners of the Kings of France. The third great fact was the catastrophal Western Schism. Between 1378 and 1417, there were two, sometimes even three, Popes at the same time, who held each other for Antichrist, and tried to drag each other from the Holy See. The Christians did not know whom they should obey. Small wonder that in the fifteenth century the heresies began to mushroom up so copiously that the Church, not even with the support of the princes, was able to eradicate these neologisms. Till Luther

(1483-1546) in the German Reformation succeeded for the first time to separate whole countries from Rome.

Once the strongest opposition to surging individualism was broken (about the middle of the fifteenth century), individualism exuberated into hyperindividualism. In every domain of life autonomous personalities emerged. In the field of economy, for instance, the most prominent one was Jacques Coeur in France, then there were the Laurins in the Netherlands, the Fuggers in Germany, the Medici in Italy. They were merchants, bankers, and monopolists, who amassed unheard-of riches by making themselves the measure of all things. They alone ruled Europe with their money. In no period were there in Western Europe so many great monarchs as between 1450 and 1550. Think of Charles V (1519-1556), Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Francis I (1494-1547), King of France; then the Dukes of Burgundy, the Condottieri in the rich Italian towns, who all put into practice the famous power philosophy of Machiavelli (1469-1527). The most spectacular, though not just the saintest, Popes of the whole history of the Church, were Julius II (1503-1513) and Leo X (1513-1521). The years from 1450 till 1550 were the period of the discoveries: Christopher Columbus (1492-1494), Amerigo Vespucci (1497), John Cabot (1497), Vasco da Gama (1498), Sebastian Cabot (1498), Pedro Alvarez Cabral (1501), Hernando Cortez (1519-1521), Ferdinand Magellan (1519-1521), Francisco Pizarro (1534), etc. And last but not least, I have to point to the host of Italian artists as Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), Michelangelo (1475-1564), Titian (1477-1576), and so on.

The slogan of this period was *virtu*, which in the preceding centuries had meant virtue (the opposite of vice); since 1450, however, the word *virtu* was, according to its derivation from the Latin "*vir*": manliness, strength, power. Nearly on every page of books of Machiavelli (1469-1527), Castiglione (1478-1529), Aretino (1492-1557), Cellini (1500-1571), etc. we come across the word *virtu*. Also the artists had to show *virtu*, not only in their love affairs and in their duels, but also in their art. They were required to display *virtu-osity* in four special fields: proportion, anatomy, perspective, and composition.

I shall have to expatiate somewhat on Italian composition in order to facilitate my later demonstrations of the similarity and

the still greater dissimilarity between the Italian composition from 1450 till 1550, and the compositional scheme of the court art from 1550 till 1750, but especially the diametrical opposition of Rembrandt's compositions to the compositions of the contemporaneous court art in the rest of Europe.

The Italian compositions from 1450 till 1550 were, first, decorative; second, prefabricated; and, third, as a result of their secondhand decorativism, formalistic. The Italians had learned their composition from the Greeks and Romans, however, without fully understanding them. They did not realize that the Greek and Roman sculptures and paintings had to be decorative, because their sculptures were over and above all temple decorations, as their painting was vase painting. The sculptures had to fit into the triangular form of a pediment, or into the rectangular form of a metope, a frieze, an altar, a pedestal, etc.; as the composition of the figures on a vase was strictly predetermined by the particular shape of the vessel to be decorated.

Lust of virtuosity urged the Italians to try to be Greeker than the Greeks themselves, and so they began not only to compose their *scenes* into the quadrangles of their picture frames, but, in addition to this, they drew, within the frames extra geometrical schemes, imaginary triangles, or quadrangles, or ellipses, or circles, into the outlines of which the biblical, mythological, or historical *figures* had to be composed. See the triangles in the Madonna representations by Vivarini, Bellini, Giorgione, Leonardo da Vinci, Beltraffio, Andrea Solario, Raphael, Bartolommeo, Andrea del Sarto, etc.

Not only painting, but the whole Italian art from 1450 till 1550 was predominantly formalistic. The architecture consisted for the main part of motifs and ornaments borrowed from the Roman architect Vitruvius Pollio of the first century A.D.; the sculpture was an endless repetition of Greek and Roman poses; think of thousands and thousands oh! so elegant, but oh! so stupid contraposto positions, for instance, Botticelli's *St. Sebastian*, dying in contraposto, Michelangelo's *David* in the moment of starting his fight with Goliath, standing in the contraposto position of a gigolo. The literature was, in fact, a mummery of Humanists in togas of Cicero, Livy, or Tacitus; in tunics of Vergil, Horace, or Ovid; or in cothurns of Plautus or Terence.

For those who consider the essence of art to be the *Gestaltung* of experiences ("Erlebnisse") in such an adequate way that the art recipients will be able to re-experience the artist's experience, will certainly not omit to admire the stupendous Italian craftsmanship, but at last turn away because of the shallowness of their only-esthetic experiences.

This period of hyperindividualism changed about 1550. The Church made an attempt in the days of the Counter-Reformation to regain what it had lost, but the religious flicker fizzled out after a few decades, and the Church from then on played no more a part of importance in the life of the peoples. The new resistance to the excesses of the autonomous personalities was Absolutism. We may see the change of life also in this way: one group of supermen (the monarchs) had become so potent (because they had the greatest possibilities to extend their power), that they were at last able to keep down the excesses of the other groups and so bring back the general hyperindividualism to normal dimensions. Absolutism was thus the end and at the same time the continuation of hyperindividualism, and it could be its continuation only by repressing the autonomy of the others. General hyperindividualism, thus, developed, in 1550, into a kind of monohyperindividualism.

ABSOLUTISM IN WESTERN EUROPE:

1550 — 1750

Absolutism was at first a necessity. In 1453, the Turks under Mohammed II conquered Constantinople. It was a heavy blow to the Italian trade between East and West, because Constantinople was the main port from where the products of Persia, India, and China were transported to Italy to be shipped further to Western Europe. Since misfortunes seldom come alone, the Turks under Sultan Selim I invaded and subdued Egypt, in 1527. The Mediterranean trade was now completely paralyzed. The Italian towns had two possibilities to cope with the situation: either they had to fight the Turks back from the Eastern Mediterranean, as they had done about 1100; or to find another sea-route to the Indies. The Italians resolved to fight, and in the meantime the Portuguese and the Spaniards sailed out to reach the Indies by the south, or by crossing the Ocean in a western direction. They succeeded. The results of all the discoveries of new worlds were the foundation of immense colonial empires and a sudden and enormous development of world trade in all countries with the exception of Italy.

Soon, however, it became manifest that the greatest obstacle to the expansion of world trade would be the worn-out medieval form of government in the European countries. The governments were not adequate to the new economic structure in the states. Especially with a view to the speed with which decisions had to be taken, the best solution seemed to be to unify all power (legislative, federative, administrative, executive, judiciary, financial, and military) in one hand.

A beginning of centralization had already been made in a few countries, before 1550; in the Netherlands, for instance, by Charles V (1516-1556). About the middle of the sixteenth cen-

tury absolutism was emerging everywhere, *with the exception of the Netherlands*.

But absolutism would not have been absolute, and would not have great chances to develop if, from the very outset, it should have restricted itself to politics. As long as there were domains in the life of the people, exempt from the unconditioned despotic power of the monarchs-by-the-grace-of-God, their power would soon be frustrated. Absolutism, consequently, ought to be extended likewise to religion, science, and the arts.

Religion came under the jurisdiction of the monarchs on the grounds of the peace treaty of Augsburg, in 1555, which had declared: "*Cuius regio illius religio*" (the ruler of the state is also the ruler of the church). The monarch had thus to determine which religion should be the state religion, to the effect, that only the ministers of the official church would enjoy the full protection of the sovereign, but then they were strictly obliged to exhort the faithful to unconditional obedience to the head of the state, even if the ruler should forsake his duties to God and his people. The protection of the state religion implied further intolerance to the dissenting religions. So, everywhere in Western Europe the most horrible persecutions occurred. Think of the Spanish autos-da-fé, the French Night of Bartholomew, the German pogroms, etc.

Science was to absolutism equally essential, especially the disciplines of philosophy, jurisprudence, political science, and history. The philosophers and jurists at the Universities were urged to accept the principles of Hobbes (1588-1679), who was the great philosopher of absolutism. His principal works in this field were *De cive* (1641) and *Leviathan or the Matter, the Form and Power of a Commonwealth Ecclesiastical and Civil* (1650). The task of the historians was to explain and to justify even the irresponsible and criminal actions of the despot as completely in accordance with the theories of Hobbes. Neologisms were suppressed with fire and sword, and progressive, thus, subversive university professors were enjailed, exiled, and many times, executed.

The task of the *arts* was the glorification of the absolutist idea and the elevation, which many times was on the border of divinization, of the bearers of the supreme power. All great

artists in the period of 1550-1750 were court architects, court sculptors, court painters, court poets, or court composers. It would, therefore, be better to abrogate the silly name "baroque," which is, in fact, an invective (meaning: wild, rank, exaggerated, and over-decorated) and a disgrace of the art of Shakespeare, Racine, Corneille, Molière, Rubens, Händel, and Bach; and to rebaptize "baroque" art into court art. The latter name is, besides, a precise contradistinction to the bourgeois art, which replaced the court art, about 1750.²

Let me anticipate in a few words, that just as there was in Holland no absolutism, there was in Holland no court and consequently no court art. It is true that a number of art historians have held Rembrandt for a "baroque" painter, so for instance, Wilhelm von Bode, General Director of the Prussian Museums; Professor Heinrich Wölfflin of the University of Munich; Fr. Schmidt-Degener, Director of the Rijksmuseum at Amsterdam; Professor Henri Focillon of the Sorbonne in Paris, during the last war at Yale University; W. Martin, Director of the Mauritshuis in the Hague and Professor at the University of Leyden; and recently Jacob Rosenberg, Professor at Harvard. The number of those experts who were at variance with the above misnomer is rather small. Professor Carl Neumann of Heidelberg University and the author of the best work on Rembrandt, was not pleased at all with the classification of Rembrandt as a "baroque" artist. And Professor Jan Huizinga of the University of Leyden, who sometimes liked to row against the stream, sided with Neumann, though without giving any explanation for his exceptional attitude.

In order to prove that Rembrandt and the great realists of the Dutch seventeenth century have nothing to do with court art, it is necessary to explicate to some extent the essence of the court art, before I come to deal with the art in Holland, and Rembrandt's style in particular.

COURT ART IN THE ABSOLUTIST COUNTRIES: 1550-1750

Court art was not only coexistent with absolutism but also the most complete fulfillment of the intentionality of the principal agents of absolutism, the monarchs, in whose service the artists were.

We have come to the notion "absolutism" by induction, starting from the phenomena of life; let us now try to find the essence of court art by deduction, starting from the notion "absolutism."³

Absolutism is a compound of the two concepts: absoluteness and power.

Absoluteness, in the sense of fullest completion (I use this pleonasm on purpose, in order to emphasize the *ne plus ultra*) does not exist in reality, cannot exist in reality, and even cannot be imagined.

Absoluteness implies unchangeableness. As long as a thing is still subject to change, we are never sure that the ultimate limit has been reached.

Unchangeableness would mean an existence beyond time, because time is change, as change is time.

Herewith the notion "absoluteness" has been reduced to the absurd. Speaking of "existence," we do affirm time, for existence is a duration of being. And "beyond time," is a negation of time. An affirmation and at the same time a negation of the same dimension, of the same thing, at the same moment, and under the same circumstances, is an incongruity, or absurdity.

The conclusion is thus: absoluteness, in a positive sense, cannot be thought or imagined, and thus cannot be expressed in a work of art either. But absoluteness is imaginable in a negative sense, that is to say, as a thing that can be infinitely extended without ever reaching the end, thus, a thing in infinite motion. In this manner, as we shall see, absoluteness can be represented

in the art. Herewith I have deduced the first and main characteristic of all court art.

It may be interesting, in this context, to point to the fact that Heinrich Wölfflin⁴ came, although along another way, to the same conclusion, that motion is the principal feature of court art. He started from the works of visual art. He confined himself to a simple statement of the facts, without disclosing the relation of the art in the absolutist countries with the totalness of life of this period.

Let me now analyze the idea of *power*.

Power can be thought of as static power (power-in-being), or dynamic power (power-in-working). Static and dynamic power are actually one and the same thing. The simple existence of a thing is *per se* an action, because existence cannot but be an existence in space, and in time. A thing, existing in space, occupies a place which for the moment cannot be occupied by something else. It is, thus, doing something; it is working. That a thing-in-working is at the same time a thing-in-being, is evident: working is only a mode of being.

Besides, a force in reality cannot but be a force-in-working; in other words, a thing that continuously affirms itself. This self-affirmation implies the negation of its opposite, and thus the an-nihil-ation of all that op-poses itself as counterforce. The steady an-nul-lation of all force from without, urges power to be power in continuous extension. A potency that ceases to affirm and, thus, to extend itself, is no longer a potency, but an impotence, beginning self-destruction.

Notwithstanding the identity of power-in-being and power-in-working in reality, I have made a mental distinction as an expedient for better thinking through the idea of power and thus the representation of power in the arts.

Power-in-being is represented in court art by *splendor*, pomp, magnificence. In the whole history there has never been an art so splendrous as the court art from 1550 till 1750.

The display of power-in-working can be further distinguished in the ratio of the normalcy or the abnormalcy of the action. In art, normalcy will be perfect *mastering* of the material and the tools. We see here again that also the art during the period of absolutist individualism, was the continuation and the trans-

ascendancy of the art of the period of hyperindividualism (1450-1550), which already stressed virtuosity.

The third characteristic of the court art is, thus, an extreme *virtuosity*.

When the mastering of the means of expression goes so far as to become a *violation* of the material, we shall have to call this abnormal virtuosity: *unnaturalness*, may be more precisely: anti-naturalness. This is the fourth characteristic of the court art.

For a better survey, I shall put my analysis of the notion "absolutism" in the form of a diagram.

The correctness of the four characteristics has to be substantiated by a number of examples.

Infinite Motion. A comparison of the ground plan of a palace of the period 1450-1550, with one of the years 1550-1750 (the period of the court art) is already instructive.

The former usually shows a simple geometric form, or a compound of geometric, by preference, rectangular forms, which even by a quick cast of the eyes is surveyable. The ground plans after 1550, on the other hand, are always complicate. Hardly are there any lines running straight. Following such a line we stumble incessantly upon unexpected curves, hooks, breaks, zig-zags, and sepentines. The lines have become alive. They are full of a nervous tension, they are restless, and in motion just for the sake of motion.

The same agitation is perceptible in the elevation of the palaces and churches, especially in the facades. The centrum of the palace is always the most decorated, sometimes overdecorated, part. It is adjoined on both sides by wings with two, often four, rich pavilions dominating the wings. The middle part of the palace and often the pavilions are crowned by domes in many stories: the lower has the form of a drum with decorated windows; then arises over the dome the main cupola wrapped in a mantle of stone ornaments; then comes the lantern, a miniature cupola, again consisting of a windowed drum and covered by a half sphere, the top of which ends into a gilded needle sharply pricking in the sky.

The roofs of the wings are decorated with a balustrade, which served as a pedestal for a row of Olympian gods and goddesses, the only beings who deserve the high honor of serving

ABSOLUTISM

is a compound of

ABSOLUTENESS

imaginable only in a negative sense, as a thing that can be infinitely extended without ever reaching an end

expressed in the arts
as
INFINITE MOTION

POWER

in being
(static)

expressed as
SPLENDOR

normal
(by mastering
the material)

abnormal
(by violating
the material)

expressed as
VIRTUOSITY

expressed as
UNNATURALNESS

as bodyguards for the omnipotences who took the trouble to have been born in these palaces and to spend there their superfluous lives.

The main hall of the palaces is usually on the second floor and on the park side. High French casements open to a stagelike terrace which extends itself along the whole length of the building. Stairs with broad steps lead to the park with marble basins and sculptured fountains. The stairs are built in elegant windings to lengthen as much as possible the distance from the terrace to the park. Standing in the park, it looks as if life in these luxurious buildings is so full, so loaded, and so tense that the walls cannot keep it from breaking through the doors and windows to rage itself out in the open. The stairs suggest cataracts of stone or marble, constantly rattling down and finally flowing away in the grounds.

The most static element in a building is the column. Because of this, nothing is more unsatisfactory than to while in a hall or a corridor and to have the feeling as if the supporting elements that keep the whole in balance, are moving. For all that, the court-architects succeeded to have the columns of the churches and palaces suggest motion. Of course, no sideward motion, but a rotation of the columns around their axes. Consequently, a motion without beginning and without end. They reached this through a spiraling, often plastic, decoration of the cylindrical shaft.

All these peculiarities, as mobile ground plans, elevations with increasing motion in a vertical direction, winding stairs, rotating columns came about during the second half of the sixteenth century, and vanished again when the days of absolutism and its court art were numbered. Each peculiarity for itself is perhaps, as far as its sense is concerned, not directly convincing, but they altogether, and seen from the totalness of life, will bring us to the insight that the explications given are not subjective *interpretations into*, but objective disclosures of the *sense* of the art happenings. The style features of the interior of the buildings will further confirm this.

The construction of the domes, or rather the decorations of the interior shells of the cupolas sticks to the same pattern during the whole period of the court art. The ceiling spanning the

opening between the walls of the churches or the walls of the palaces, is painted open with a blue sky with white clouds, which in the palaces are crowded by goddesses and nymphs, with a perspective from below. Those on the lower clouds are tall, those on the higher clouds become, in the ratio of the increasing distance from the onlookers, smaller and smaller. The figures on the highest clouds are so tiny that they are hardly discernible as such. The figures in the churches are, of course, saints and angels.

What is the sense of this incessantly repeated scheme? Standing on a clear day outside and looking upwards, we do not discern where the blue ends. That was just what the court painters wanted us to feel in the interior of the buildings. The ceiling is closed, otherwise the interior of the halls would be uninhabitable, but the painters painted the ceiling again open, with the result that the space of the interior extends itself infinitely upwards.

What the architects and painters did with the ceilings and the domes, they tried to do the same with the walls. It became the vogue in those days to decorate the walls with mirrors. A classic example is the "salle des glaces" in the palace of Versailles. When we are sitting in a room before a mirror with another mirror just behind us, the room seems to prolong itself endlessly in a horizontal direction.

Instead of mirrors, many times, wall paintings were used which open the walls to monumental landscapes with shepherds and shepherdesses, satyrs and nymphs enacting their always old and yet always new love adventures, or goddesses, covered only by their virtue, and dreaming away their idle days.

The landscapes display an endless depth and a movement in their forms which leads the observer farther and farther away to the horizon. The painters brought this about, in the first place, by elevating the horizon, in other words, by stretching the distance between the spectator and the background to the utmost. Besides, the landscape used to be built up in the diagonal, because the diagonal is the greatest distance in a square. The diagonal is accentuated by a way, a path, a river which begins in the right or the left corner of the foreground, and moves then to the opposite corner in the background. To bring the foreground as close as possible to the onlooker, they painted a "repoussoir" (a piece of rock, a bush, a figure) on the largest

possible scale there where the motion to the horizon starts. The diagonal is lengthened out, and the movement intensified by painting the stream in numerous windings and invisibilizing its vanishing point. At the horizon we can no longer discern where the river ends and the sky begins.

The tri-dimensional diagonal, in the sense of the diagonal of the groundplan, was, thus, originally an expression of infinite motion. But the court painters used the diagonal also for their two-dimensional compositions. Rubens (1577-1640), for instance, has composed his *Descent of the Cross* (1612-1614), in the Cathedral of Antwerp, so that the body of Christ, the bodies of the holy men and women, accentuate conspicuously the diagonal running from the left corner below until the right corner at the top. The same Rubens did in his picture *Rape of the Daughters of Leucippus* (1619 or 1620) of the Pinacothek at Munich.

The objective of the two-dimensional diagonal is the same as that of the tridimensional: stretching as much as possible the motion, this time not from the fore to the back, but from below to the top. In Rubens' *Venus and Adonis*, we find a combination of both diagonals: the two-dimensional moves upwards from the right to the left through the premeditated positions of the legs, the bodies, the heads and the arms of the figures; and the tri-dimensional starting from the repoussoir (Venus) in the right corner, runs over the hounds and the brook to the horizon at the left. The staffage of the landscape accompanies in a discreet way the two diagonals of the composition.

The diagonal composition of the court art is what Wölfflin calls the *open* form, in contradistinction to the *closed* form of the former Italian art from 1450 till 1550. It is evident that both are decorative, prefabricated schemes. We shall see later that Rembrandt never used them. The compositions of his great works are never extrinsic, secondhand, formalistic, but always intrinsic, original, unique, and induplicable.

In the representation of *human figures*, the artists had two possibilities: to produce an excess of motion, either by choosing attitudes, for instance, the poses of fighters, the flight of angels, which for themselves already suggested a superfluity of motion; or by expressing motion in the form of emotion, thus the motion of the soul, instead of, or in addition to the motion of the body.

There has never been a period in the history of the arts, in which the emotion of the saints and the angels was so redundant, surpassed the normal limits so much so that we can only describe it as hysteria. Seldom do we see holy persons in a quiet pose, they are standing or kneeling in a paroxysmal or convulsionary attitude, and staring with wild frightened eyes at things invisible to us. *The Vision of the holy Theresa* in the Church Sta Maria della Vittoria in Rome, a sculpture in white marble by Bernini (1598-1680), is more the orgasm of a girl than the mystical trance of a saint. Observe what El Greco (1548?-1625) did with his male and female saints. They look often like patients of a sanitarium for mental diseases. This impression is further sustained by the mysterious motion of their garbs, the forms, lines, and colors of which are changing like dancing flames. Greco's special technique, which he learned on Crete, or maybe in the monastery of the Mount Athos, enabled him in an extraordinary way to produce the ghostly effect which we find in almost all his paintings. He did not start painting, as his Italian and Spanish colleagues did, from the light parts and spreading the shadows over the bright only in the last moment; he painted from the dark into the light. Herewith he made his pictures look like frightful dreams, emerging from the dark of the night. Many times we are so to say waiting for the moment when they will gradually dim out and dissolve into the murk from which they arose.

The two great differences between the representation of emotion in the court arts, and the depiction of emotion in the paintings of Rembrandt are, in the first place, that the latter—with the exception of his earliest period, when he was still under the influence of his Italianizing masters Jacob van Swanenburgh in Leyden, and Pieter Lastman (1583-1633) in Amsterdam—never depicted an emotion at its peak, as the court painters used to do; and, in the second place, that the artists in the absolute countries always represented the exaggerated emotions in a state of *being* (static), whereas Rembrandt depicted the inner life of his figures in a state of *becoming* (thus dynamic).

Not only the court painters and sculptors, but also the court poets and composers, although they had at their disposal an art-in-time, reproduced the emotion static. We do not witness

how the passions of love, jealousy, hatred, or avarice, etc. come about, how they grow, what phases they go through, before they reach the culminating point. No, the passions remain unalterably the same. What changes in the tragedies, comedies, and novels, is only the surrounding world: the conflicts that happen to come into existence through the passions. Racine (1639-1699) explains in his *Phèdre*: "Les passions n'y sont pas présentées aux yeux que pour montrer tout le désordre dont elles sont causes" (The passions are represented only to demonstrate how they disturb the order). The miser of Molière (1622-1673), his *Tartuffe*, his lovers, are at the end of the play exactly the same misers, the same hypocrites, the same lovers of the beginning of the play. We cannot speak of an intension or an extension of their affects. Only the world around them moves and changes, and awards their affects, in case they are actions, a happy ending; in case the affects are passions, it punishes them, especially in the comedies, by holding them up to ridicule.

In the compositions or in the single movements of his works (with the exception of his recitatives), Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750), only *one affect* is sustained: desire, or scorn, or love, or remorse, etc. and without any development, without any fluctuations, as we shall later find them in the music of Joseph Haydn (1732-1809), Mozart (1756-1791), and especially Beethoven (1770-1827). Bach's music is never an adaptation to the text, but the simple expression of one prevailing sentiment of the text.

Therefore, was it possible that Bach could use his secular music also for religious purposes. His *Christmas Oratorium*, for instance, is for the greater part an arrangement of three secular compositions. The *Drama per musica*, composed for the anniversary of the Queen, on December 8, 1733, supplied the music of the choruses of the first and the third part, and two arias; a composition to celebrate the birth of the Crown-Prince, on September 5, 1733, the music for four arias, one duet, and a chorus; and the salutation cantata for the occasion of the visit of King Frederic Augustus III to Leipzig, the music of one aria for the *Oratorium*. Bach had only to underly another text with the same affect.⁵

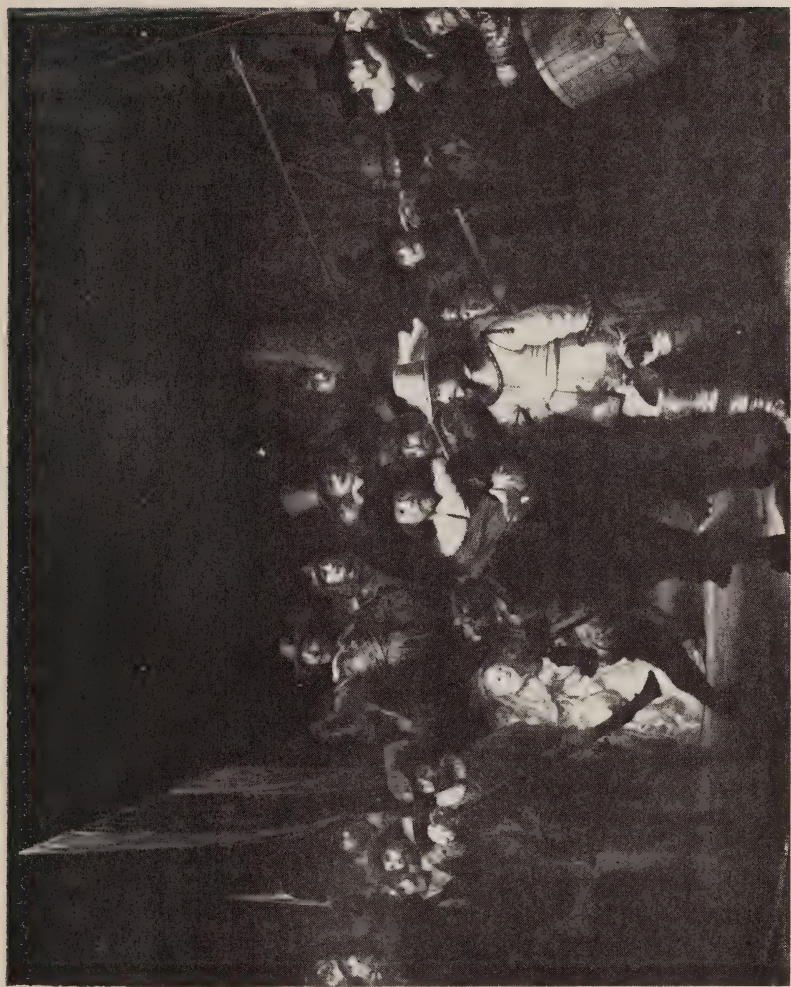
Architecture, sculpture, and painting are no arts-in-time.

Time is reduced in these works to a single moment. Literature, music, and dance are not possible without the flux of time. They have no immobilized moments, there is always a succession of moments. Herein is to be found the explanation why the motion of the court art had greater possibilities in music than, for instance, in painting. For a poet, an actor, a dancer, and a composer time is one of the most essential means of expression, but the time dimension alone is not sufficient. Equally necessary is the irresistible mobility of the form.

As for *literature*, the infinite motion is most manifest in the novel. The great masterworks of those days, for instance, *Don Quixote* by Miguel Saavedra de Cervantes (1547-1616), or *Simplicius Simplicissimus* by Hans Christoffel Grimmelshausen (1620-1676), are because of their intricate structure not best fit to make clear what we have to understand by mobility of the form. More suitable for this purpose are the novels of lower artistic value, which show their primitive structure at first glance.

In the first chapter of such a novel, the hero of the book, of course, a paragon of handsomeness and noblemindedness, becomes enamored of a princess lovely and virtuous to the highest degree. Everything is set for the wedding, but in the nick of time the virgin is kidnapped by the scum of pirates and abducted to a far, unknown country. In the last chapter, let me say, the one hundred and twentieth, the noble prince finds his bride, for my part, in Syria and, thanks to God, in a still undamaged condition. In the chapters in between the author treats us to a series of thrilling adventures in the countries around the Mediterranean Sea, where the lover is in quest of the lady of his heart.

Instead of one hundred and twenty, there could have been just as well two hundred chapters; and the author might, likewise, have abridged the whole book to eighty chapters; the reader would not have gained or lost whatsoever by these changes. The novelist could even have exchanged the sequence of the adventures without impairing the whole. It is, thus, a book without a necessarily conditioned structure. For this reason this structure may be called a serial form, which we also come across in the orchestra suites and in the ballet dances of the opera seria. The parts are only loosely inter-connected, in fact, not connected at



Rembrandt: Captain Banning Cocq and his Company of Civic Guards, 1642.
Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.



Rembrandt: David and Saul. David portrait of Spinoza. Saul portrait of Rabbi Saul Levi Morteira 1657, Prins Mauritshuis, The Hague. Rembrandt pillories Rabbi Morteira for having cursed Rembrandt's friend Spinoza out of the Synagogue in 1656 and for having obtained from the Burgomasters Spinoza's exile from Amsterdam.

all. The form is open on all sides. Because of this the form is a typical time phenomenon of the court art period.

Another characteristic feature in the literature of those days is the *Alexandrine*, a verse consisting regularly of six iambs. The Alexandrine was already in use before 1550, and held its own since then, but in the absolutist period, the caesura after the line changed, of course, responsive to the general changes of life. The scheme of the old Alexandrine is:

u - u - u - | u - u - u - ||
u - u - u - | u - u - u - ||

The long caesura is thus at the end of the line, and after the third foot is only a short caesura.

The Alexandrine of the court shows the following scheme:

u - u - u - | | u - u - u - }

We see, that the sentences of the text come to a close in the middle of the verse and, if ever possible, the caesura at the end of the line is omitted. So the reader is obliged to jump, without a pause, from one line into the next. The motion has now become more pressing and pushing. A few lines from a poem by the German poet Fleming (1609-1640) will best illustrate what the Alexandrine of the court period looks like:

“O Gott, was rauhe Not! Wie schäumt die schwarze See
Und sprützt ihr grünes Saltz! Wie reisst der Zorn die Wellen
Durch nebel-volle Luft! Wie heult das wüste Bellen
Der tollen Stürme uns an! Die Klippe kracht von Weh,
Wir fliegen durch die Nacht und stürzen von der Höh
In den getrennten Grund! Die often Stösse fällen
Den halb-zuknickten Mast. Die schwachen Seiten prellen
Auf die gespitzte Klipp. O himmel, ich vergeh!”

Gryphius tried to produce the same effect in his poem by a nervous accumulation of superlative nouns:

“Ach und Weh!

Mord! eter! Jammer! Angst! Kreutz! Marter! Würmer! Plagen!
Pech! Folter! Henker! Flamme! Stank! Geister! Kälte! Klagen!

Ach Vergeh

Tief und Höh!”

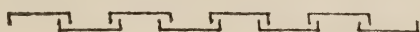
Music, as I have already remarked before, is motion, thus art-in-time. Apart of the mechanical tempo, music can also have a motion immanent in the form of the melody, the harmony, and the rhythm. The music of the court period is characterized, first, by the uniform, restless, almost endless spinning-on of one or another theme. A sharply delineated, closed and rounded-out theme was in those days rather unusual. A theme was always a complex, a sequence of small motives which could be spun out without a definite aim.

The *fugue* is one of the most typical polyphonic compositions of the seventeenth century. The subject theme is first given out by one voice part, which then proceeds with a counterpoint. The other parts successively repeat the same subject (which is now called the answer, or the comes), at the interval of a fifth or a fourth, and continue their melodies integrating them into one progressive polyphonic whole, in which the theme alternately disappears and reappears.

As the name "fugue" indicates, it is an incessant fleeing and flying of the parts, one running after the other like the restless waves playing and romping in the surf. In order to intensify and to accelerate the pressure of the motion, the composers often make use of diminutions, especially toward the end of the composition. The distances between the theme intonations are narrowed down as much as possible to suggest to the listeners a pushing-each-other-aside of the voices. Many other little tricks are used as, for instance, the procrastination of the final close by deceptive cadences, suspensions, organ points, and allargandi, which all betray a kind of fear for the cessation of the motion. In fact, the fugue has no end as, for instance, the sonata of the second part of the eighteenth century has. In the fugue it is always a rather brusque breaking-off. When the music at last stops, we have the feeling that it could go on farther and farther. The motion carries on in our mind, although we hear no longer any sound.

Another trick to stress the motion is the *sequence*, a succession of repeated melodic phrases rising or falling usually by the regular diatonic degrees in the same scala. Again another trick for the same purpose, mostly practiced in slow movements, is the *basso ostinato*: a bass passage of four or eight measures is

continually repeated, though with constantly changing melody and harmony. The semblance of never pausing, in order to express the endless push forward of the music, gave rise to a typical technique of shackling melody links together. In *arias* with obbligato instrument; in *sonatas* for a solo-instrument with harpsichord; and in *concerti grossi* with the group of solo-instruments and the group of the tutti,—the simple alternation of the concerting groups is not enough. Before the close of a melodic line, the other part already intones its line, and so it goes on throughout the whole movement. There are no pauses. The technique of shackling may be illustrated by the following scheme:



An endless (in the fullest sense of the word) composition is the *canon*. It has two or more voice parts employing imitation in the strictest form: not only the intervals but the note values are identical. The leading part gives out a melody. When it has reached, let me say after eight beats, the segno \oplus , the second part takes up the same melody, throughout its extent. When the first part has reached the D.C. (da Capo), the second part will be eight measures behind the first part. The D.C. thus, cannot be considered to be the end of the composition. The first voice must, according to the prescription D.C. commence anew from the very beginning. The segno \oplus is no more the end of the composition, because the second voice has still to perform eight measures of the whole melody. Therefore, wheresoever the melody discontinues, it is always a breaking-off. In fact, the composition is endless. Hence the name “perpetual canon” or “circular canon.”

The same endlessness is to be found in the *aria*, which follows the Scheme A-B-A. The first part A is instrumental. B is vocal and instrumental, and the third part is again indicated by A because it is identical to the first part A. Very often the third part is not even written out; at the end of B we are warned by the abbreviation D.C. that A has to be repeated until the word “fine.” But the “fine” is no end. It would be an end if there were an intrinsic necessity in the form of the composition itself to stop there. If A for the first time passes to B, why should it not

do the same for the second time? It would be an end, if the aria had been composed in such a way, that a repetition of B would be excluded.

SPLENDOR is the second characteristic of court art. The exemplification of the splendor is a hopeless beginning. Every work of architecture, of sculpture, of painting, of literature, of music is splendrous in the highest degree. Let me, therefore, restrict myself to two realms, in which the splendor is most conspicuous: architecture and portrait painting. The latter is within the context of this book of the greatest momentum, because it demonstrates the wide divergence of the splendrous style of the court art from the splendorless realistic style of the Dutch school of portrait painting with its most prominent exponent, Rembrandt.

A few examples of splendor in *architecture* have already been touched upon, when I discussed the facade and the interior of the palaces of this period. The most decorated part of the palace is the "escalier des ambassadeurs," destined for the reception of foreign monarchs or princes, or ministers of the highest rank accredited to a foreign government as the official representatives of their sovereigns. The staircase is, in fact, a kind of opera stage, reaching through at least two stories and built of precious marble and gilded bronze, with two broad flights of stairs flowing downward in dashing windings. The walls of the staircase are richly decorated with columns, entablatures, statues, and reliefs. On days of reception His Majesty stood on the little balcony in the middle of the landing, high above the visitor and his retinue. The sovereign dressed in gala was surrounded by his family, his ministers and court-officials. His bodyguard, his Moors, his haiduks, his pages, all gorgeously attired in, what we nowadays should call, operetta uniforms, were grouped on the stairs. The purpose of all these theatrical effects was to produce an unforgettable first impression on the visitors.

The *portrait painting* in the period of the court art was another means for the absolute rulers to impose themselves, in the first place, on their subjects. It was a glorification of the idea of absolutism. Only kings, princes, ministers, generals, and those who were further in the service of absolutism, deserved the

honor to be painted. Portraits of burghers were in the absolutist countries extremely scarce.

The style of the court portrait remained in its essence the same for two hundred years. I shall enumerate the main features for the purpose of a preview how far remote the portraits of Rembrandt were from the so-called "baroque" portrait.

The meaning of the court portrait was not the likeness of the portrayed, which Frans Hals intended; or the disclosure of the inner life of the model, which was the aim of Rembrandt; but to give the observer an idea of the high social rank of the person in question. This has been unequivocally confirmed by the aesthetician Roger de Piles.⁶ He writes: "The portraits must look, as if they were addressing us as follows: Stop! Pay well attention! I am this invincible king, full of my majesty; or: I am this courageous general, who impresses the whole world with fear; or: I am this great minister who knows all underhand ways about politics; or: I am this magistrate of highest wisdom and reasonableness." All these prescriptions amount to *representation*.

The typical pose of the body alone speaks volumes. The model has to fill out the whole canvas. He or she is standing or sitting with the body facing the spectator and the head forcefully averted to the side; or looking at the subjects supposed to be present before the picture, but then the body is turned away. This so-called heroic pose was, thus, a combination of arrogant aversion from the public—man was supposed to begin with the baron—and at the same time of imperative rapprochement, because without subjects there could not be a king. Moreover, the princes needed their subjects, were it only to pay the bills for their expensive divertissements. Apart from the social implication, the pose of the portrayed was also popular as an expression of motion. Everything had to be moving, even a body in rest. The imperiousness of the portrayed was further emphasized by the penetrating eyes and one or another theatrical gesture of the hand, while the other hand clutches a scepter, grasps an edge of the royal mantle, or is placed akimbo. The make-up was likewise of the greatest importance. On whatever hour of the day they were painted, they wore a grand gala costume with all their decorations, orders, ribbons, and jewelry, with a high hair-do and high heels—even under the boots of the gentlemen—to size

them up. The pompous royal mantle of heavy velvet with a crust of gold embroidery and ermine lining, had to give greater amplitude to the stature. The mantle was never hanging down in vertical folds, the arm bent in the elbow had to make the garment hang out as wide as possible. The painters were, of course, required to copy, true to nature, the texture of the velvet, silk, lace, jewels, because these things were the symbols of the wealth and, consequently, of the power of this little omnipotence. The background of the portraits was required to be just as theatrical as the grand man or woman in the foreground. Mostly an immense column is shoved in one of the corners behind them, the upper part of which used to be covered with a bombastically swollen drapery in solemn colors. On the other side of the figure, we get a look at a landscape with monstrous rocks, a foaming stream, and a gathering storm in the clouds. Even nature had to be heroic.

It is not necessary to have seen many portraits by the realist Dutch school, especially by Rembrandt, to realize the irresponsibility of those art historians who classify Rembrandt as a "baroque" artist.

VIRTUOSITY is the third characteristic of the court art.

The old virtuosity of the period 1450-1550 never reached beyond a perfect technique. In the seventeenth century, however, when virtuosity was no longer exclusively a display of the virtue of the painter, but a demonstration of the absolute virtue of the monarch, virtuosity had to go far beyond the limit, as the power of the monarch surpassed all earthly power. Many works of art of the absolutist period make us wonder whether it is still art, or rather artificiality.

In one of the palaces of Charles Eugen at Louisbourg (Württemberg) I saw one day a portrait of an eighteenth century princess which struck me not only because of the natural beauty of the model but because of the supreme virtuosity in rendering the structure of skin, hair, eyes, and the material of her gown. Suddenly I discovered a fly on the hand of the girl. Fearing that the insect could drop its visitcard, I waved my handkerchief to chase the unwelcome visitor. The fly, however, did not move. By closer inspection I discovered that the fly was painted, of course, for no purpose other than of eliciting in the sovereign the sensa-

tional feeling that there was nothing impossible for his court painter, as there were no limits to his own absolute power.

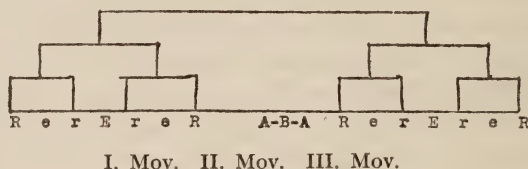
In the seventeenth century Italy had a regular school for trick-painting. It was the school of the Illusionists of Andrea Pozzo (1642-1709) who even composed a manual with the title *Perspectiva pictorum et architectorum*. The popularity of this school may be gathered from the fact that Johann Boxbarth edited a German translation of the work with the title: *Der Maler und Baumeister Perspektiv*. The Illusionists painted sham-architecture on the ceilings and the shells of the domes, which was the two-dimensional continuation of the tri-dimensional architecture of the building. In order to make the transitions from tridimensionality to twodimensionality invisible, transient parts like balustrades, balconies, mouldings, draperies, figures, often only a single stretched-out arm of a painted saint, were modeled in stucco and then painted to deceive the observers, and, of course, to demonstrate and to glorify the unlimited power of the monarch.

The *picture-songs*, composed on solemn occasions by court poets, were many times on the border of "Kitch." The virtuosity instigated the poets to construe the lines in such lengths and in such a number that all the beginnings and ends together shaped the contour of a goblet, a cup, a rummer, when it was a drinking-song; a crown, when it was a birthday celebration of Serenissimus or a member of his family; a heart, when one of the princes or princesses was engaged to marry.

Examples of virtuosity in *music* are on hand in so overwhelming a number that one really does not know where to begin and where to end. The text determined the form of the melody. When the word "high" was used, the melody jumped up; when "low," it plumped down. A mountain was delineated in notes. "Eternity" was symbolized by a row of long notes sometimes through measures. "Glory," "fury," "streams" were sounded by endless melismata. On the word "altogether" the voices passed into a unison. For "mourning" and "sadness" black notes were used; for "joy" white (open) notes. Palestrina (d.1594) depicted through an ascending passage of third parallels the ladder of Jacob arising from the earth to heaven, when in the text Jacob's dream was mentioned. Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) placed the notes

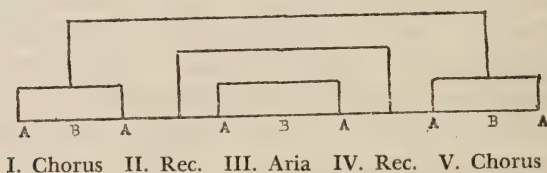
in the form of a cross when the mob of Jerusalem gathered before the palace of Pilates, howled their "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

Bach was one of the greatest virtuosi of his time. He liked to build up his compositions in architectonic forms, for instance, in a bilateral symmetry. Study the scheme he used for concerti grossi:



R stands for ritornel or tutti-passage,
E for episode or solo-passage,
A-B-A indicates the stereotypical da-Capo-form.

J. S. Bach's *Pentecost Cantata* (No. 34): "O ewiges Feuer," has the following scheme, which reminds of the groundplans of seventeenth century palaces:



The bilateral symmetry of both schemes has been carried through not only in the whole, but even in the parts.

Bach's most amazing "tour de force" is one of the compositions of his *Kunst der Fuge*.

It has seven voices. The first six voices have exactly the same melody, not only the same intervals but even the same proportional duration of the notes.

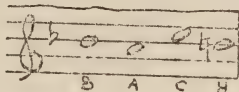
The second voice is the first voice augmented, and the third voice is the first voice diminished.

The fourth voice is the first in reverse: it begins with the last note of the first voice and retrogrades note for note.

The fifth voice is the inverted first but this time augmented.

The sixth voice is the same inversion but now diminished.

Every one would expect that this was the end. Not so Bach! As a seventh voice he composes to the six voices his name BACH in notes. This needs some explanation. B flat is called in Germany, B; and B natural, H. The transnotation of his name is thus:



And all the voices together sound perfectly. Listening to the performance we have not the impression that such a stupendous mathematical trickery is behind the composition.

UNNATURALNESS is the fourth characteristic of the court art. We find the violation of nature in all domains of life, small wonder that the arts were not exempt from it.

The burgher was in the period of absolutism just a thing, a property, or just cattle: "du bétail pour le faire égorger." The last expression was used by King Frederic II of Prussia to cry out his profound contempt for his royal colleagues. In order to make money, they sold their subjects by the ten thousands as cannonfodder, who so got the great honor to give their lives for a country, that was not theirs.

Man was in these centuries anything but man. In the same way as the rulers made puppets out of man, so their court artists had to fabricate many times men out of puppets. Statues of saints were covered with veritable clothes, the little Jesus of Nazareth as well as the "Manneken-Pis" of Brussels; their heads were decorated with genuine hair, and they stared at you with genuine glass eyes. Artists modeled roses out of porcelain, and soaked them with rose-oil to make them still more genuine. Stone and marble were softened up till one could bend, roll, and fold it. The architects had a satanic pleasure to make possible even the impossible. Parts of buildings, stone and marble clouds, floated overhead in the air seemingly without any support. Painters painted with wool and silk, rugs were knotted out of gypsum, but so true to nature as to make you take them in your hands to "see" them with the tips of your fingers. The rags of a beggar were painted with such virtuosity as to make you feel an

unsavory itching all over your body. And it was, as if from the glass sarcophagi with the half decayed corpses of modeled and painted saints, a penetrant smell of rottenness escaped which turned your stomach.

The unnaturalness was most visible in the *garden architecture*. In those days the garden was not grown, but built, as if it were a part of a palace. The groundplan was planimetrically divided into compartments, separated from each other by walls, but walls of ligustrum. The rooms were furnished with marble benches, tripods of bronze, marble or poreclain busts, or vases on pedestals. The lawns were planted with yew trees, laurels, beechwood, ligustrum, boxwood, ivy, etc., which to the entertainment of the princes were not allowed to be trees or bushes, but were transmogrified by cutting and trimming them into obelisks, cones, pyramids, spheres, cubes, baskets, pumps, birds, peacocks, horses, yea, even human figures.

The seventeenth century garden was denatured, unnatural as everything was unnatural. But we can imagine how Serenissimus must have felt joy in this surrounding, when he was strolling through his topiary park and saw all these crippled and brutalized and violated things. How proud he must have been of his power which could make, for his personal delight, out of trees men and women, in the same way as he would have been proud, when sitting in the evening in the royal box of his theatre, he realized that women had been made out of men. The sopranos and altos were castrated men during the seventeenth century.

As for all the other manifestations of unnaturalness: for instance, in criminal law (torture), on the stage, in costumes, in the institution of the court jesters, in the slave trade, etc., I refer you to my book on the eighteenth century, in which I depicted the change from the court art to the bourgeois art.⁷

HOLLAND IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

It is generally known that, from the prehistoric period on, through all the ages, up to the present time, the population of Holland (the provinces North-Holland or West-Friesland, South-Holland and Zealand) have had a constant fight against the murderous North Sea. The land is situated about fifteen feet below sea level, and is protected against the sea by dunes, and against the three mighty rivers (Rhine, Meuse, Scheldt) which have their mouths in the low lands, by dikes. The dunes as well as the dikes needed constant repair till the next storm and the spring floods tore the relatively primitive constructions apart and the work had to be done over again.

On the sea itself the struggle was most embittered. The people could not stay at home and cultivate their fields and their meadows and raise cattle, there was not enough land whatever they did reclaiming and poldering. So they were obliged to sail out in order to get their daily supply of fish. The ships (busses) were miserable. The small bluff-bowed boats, with a short mast, looked like nutshells. The aids and appliances were poor, there were, of course, no nautical instruments, no compass, no time piece, no nautical charts with depth measurements, no atlases, nothing. The skipper and the crew needed a long training, apart from an innate alertness, a sharp observation, and an incessant concentration, because they were in constant danger of life if they did not remain in closest contact with their surrounding world of sky, lights, clouds, and winds.

After conditions had improved in course of time, larger ships were built, and the equipment had become better, the people's relation to the sea, and herewith to the whole world, changed. They got more self-assurance. Their awe for the sea turned at

last into love, especially after the fishers had become freighters, and the freighters merchants.

So the sea was it who had not only nourished but also educated the character of the Hollanders to a keen lust of reality which gradually made them to a people of reckless pirates, wild adventurers, and so shrewd merchants that the English used to compliment them as the "Chinese of Europe."

In the thirteenth century commerce still occupied the third place in the country's economy; in the fourteenth century the relation between agriculture, fishery, and trade changed in favor of the latter, obviously through the prosperity of the Baltic trade; and in the fifteenth century it was rightly said that Holland was "geheelic gefondeert op coopmanscippe" (wholly founded on commerce).

Amsterdam was in the twelfth century a small fishing-village; in the fifteenth it was one of the largest sea-ports of Western Europe, and the center of the world grain trade.

The fall of Constantinople, in 1453, and the subsequent conquest of Egypt by the Turks caused, the shifting of the center of world trade between East and West from the north of Italy to the South-Netherlands, at first to Bruges. Unfortunately the harbor of Bruges, het Zwin, soon began to silt, so that the bigger ships could no longer call this port, and then the trade center moved, in the course of the fifteenth century, to Antwerp.

After the separation of the northern provinces, the Hollanders and Zealanders blocked the Scheldt, in 1581, and thereupon the world trade was transferred to Amsterdam. Herewith began the great prosperity of Holland. After a few years the little country could pride itself on being in possession of the richest colonies of the world.

In the sixteenth century two rebellions took place in the North-Netherlands: one in the domain of religion, another in the domain of politics. The two rebellions were virtually one. First, because the object of the political revolt was Philip II, in his capacity of sovereign of the Netherlands; the object of the religious insurrection was likewise Philip II, in his capacity of a plenipotentiary or executioner of the Popes. Second, because the motive of the Dutch people for their struggle for independence from Spain, and the motive for their apostasy from Rome,

was the same, namely, the maintenance of their position in world trade. Nothing could have been more fatal for them than the eventual move of world trade from Amsterdam to Emden, as was planned; third, Philip II used political coercive measures to carry through his religious aim, and religious pressure (Inquisition) for his political purposes. Incidentally, Philip II himself was convinced that the policy of the religion and the policy of the state were inseparably connected. He declared this on the diet of August 7, 1559⁸.

APOSTASY FROM ROME

The apostasy of the northern provinces from Rome was chiefly due to the exploitation of the people by the priests and the monks. How do we know? Through Mary of Hungary, the sister of the Emperor Charles V, who had appointed her Regent of the Netherlands. She was a devout Catholic and as such rather inclined to excuse than to smear the Church. Besides, no one was better informed than the Governess. In her letter of June 6, 1525, to her stadholder in Holland, she reports that she has made a thorough investigation after the reasons for the growing apostasy in the Netherlands and discovered that this regrettable state of affairs was mainly due to the "exactions, compositions, et fouldes," in a word, to the extortions of the clergy⁹.

The testimony of the Regent of the Netherlands can only be rated at its true value, when we know that shortly before the Emperor Charles V himself had been necessitated to take the most drastic action against the extortions of the clergy. In his placard of October 1, 1520, he calls these extortions a "schaden end oppressie van onse voirs. ondersaeten end van de gemeyne welvaart van dien" (a serious danger to the general welfare of the country).¹⁰

The Catholics were fed up with the indulgences. An indulgence is the remission of the temporal (usually purgatorial) punishment due for sins, the guilt and the eternal punishment of which had been pardoned by the reception of the sacrament of penitence. The Church used to lease these indulgences for a lump sum to one or another banker. In 1520, for instance, an

indulgence had been leased to an Italian bank in Antwerp. The Italians engaged a number of eloquent monks to sell letters of indulgence "tot der pachters meeste profijt" (for the best profit of the lessors).¹¹

In the *Divisie-Kronijk* of the year 1517, thus still before the Reformation, a *Catholic* lamented about the hundreds of thousands of guilders which yearly flowed from the Netherlands to Rome, and concluded that the Netherlandish countries have never been exploited by the Roman Emperors in such a ruinous way, as it then was done by the Roman Popes.¹²

Not only the Popes incessantly invented new indulgences to finance their luxurious lives, their bastards, and their nephews; but the bishops and the abbots tried to make money in the same way. In 1512, for instance, two indulgences were issued, one for the restoration of the monastery of the Augustinians at Dordrecht; another for the restoration of the St. Lawrence Church at Rotterdam. In 1513, the crumbled tower of the St. Peter Church at Leyden had to be rebuilt; in 1520, a monastery was to be founded at Enkhuizen; in 1525, the Dominicans in Harlem urgently needed money which again could most easily be obtained by means of letters of indulgence. The behavior of the Dominicans at Harlem, in 1531, was so saucy and the reaction of the burghers so vehement that, according to the Dutch historian de Hoop Scheffer,¹³ this date must be considered as the beginning of the Reformation in Holland.

Another thing which exasperated the Dutch people was the tariffs for the sacraments. They were constantly raised and that at a time when the poor people could hardly buy the necessities of life. The tax for the Last Sacraments was doubled within three years.¹⁴ New holidays were introduced on which it was forbidden under fine to work, for no purpose other than to sell dispensations.¹⁵

The clergy even sabotaged the Inquisition of Charles V. They dragged the heretics before their own tribunals in order to have the right to confiscate the properties of the delinquents and to cash the legal charges, which used to be so extravagant, that many times the government was obliged to intervene.¹⁶ When the latter occasionally wished to be informed about the computation of these charges, the clergy replied: Our charges do no more con-

cern you, than your charges concern us. Everybody knew in Amsterdam that the dean of Amsterdam and West-Friesland passed judgments in ecclesiastical lawsuits, dependent on the hush-money that the defendants were ready to pay.

But the worst of all was the following nuisance. Holland was founded on commerce. More than a half of the population lived in the towns. We may gather from this fact the economic importance of the rural districts for the subsistence of the townspeople. The expansion and the prosperity of trade indirectly depended, to a considerable extent, on agriculture. How now were the conditions in the country? About 1500, a quarter of the arable land was in the possession of the Church. Let me quote one complaint which typifies the general situation in Holland. In 1497, the town of Horn repined: "We are subsisting on trade, agriculture and grazing cattle, but the fields and the meadows in the surroundings of our town have been bought up and seized by the monasteries and the clergy of our town and the neighborhood, so completely that, in course of time, our trade will perish, unless the monasteries are forbidden to continue in this way." As early as 1328, Count William III had been obliged to stop the unsatiable land hunger of the clergy. Of course, in vain. In 1446, Duke Philip of Burgundy prohibited any further expansion of the monasteries of the Franciscans in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, in 1523, it looked as if "the whole province of Zeeland was about to fall into the hands of the Church." In Holland it was "*al van één natuur*" (just the same).¹⁷

"The damage and the oppression of the general welfare" was so crucial that Charles V was repeatedly urged to deal harshly with the clergy. In 1520, 1524, 1531, and 1532, the Emperor prohibited by placards further extension whatsoever of the estates already in the hands of the parish priests and the 500 monasteries, convents, and nunneries, each with 50 to 700 monks, friars, or nuns. All these religious houses ran big businesses, had large workshops, which flooded the markets with products. The farmers could not compete with the monks, since the latter had not to pay labor, and were exempt from all taxes which, therefore, weighed the heavier on the little man.¹⁸

Besides, the clergymen did not shrink from abusing their authority by exerting pressure in order to enrich themselves. In

1518, for instance, the town of Hertogenbosch in North-Brabant, was laid under an interdict, in other words, restrained from the sacraments, because the canons were not content with the quantity of wine and beer (forty cart-loads of wine and twelve hundred barrels of beer yearly for altogether thirty canons), which they were allowed to take in duty unpaid.

What could the Dutch people do to remedy the situation which grew worse and worse, and prevent the ruin of the economy and the state? A reformation of the Church from within—the ideal of Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466?-1536)—had proved to be issueless. The only salvation seemed to be, shaking off the yoke of the Church. However, as long as the Hollanders still believed in the doctrine of the Church, their apostasy would be very difficult, if not impossible. Their material liberation had to be preceded by their spiritual liberation. The struggle for better material conditions of life, had to be fought on the field of the dogmas.

The clergy made it easy for the malcontents to turn away from the church. It is true a great number of priests lived in an exemplary way. But the majority were notorious for their gluttony, avarice, and debauchery. An anthology of their sins may be found in the book already mentioned by J. G. de Hoop Scheffer.¹⁹

Lutheranism. The dogmatic struggle began when the heretic ideas of Luther (1483-1546) infiltrated from Germany into Holland through soldiers, travelers, merchants, defrocked monks, scholars, peddlers with leaflets, wandering ministers, etc. The doctrine of Luther was the first, and for some time to come, the only positive form for the up to then negative religious attitude of a part of the Dutch people.

Lutheranism, however, was for the Hollanders just for want of something better. It was the proper religion for Germany with its thousands of sovereigns and half-sovereigns and a population consisting for the larger part of farmers and artisans. But Lutheranism was inadequate to a *mercantile* people as the Hollanders were. Luther, for instance, condemned world trade. Read his deliverances on this subject in *Kleiner Sermon vom Wucher* (1519), *Von Kaufshandlung und Wucher* (1524), and his occasional remarks in his books *An den Christlichen Adel*

and *Tischreden*. He availed himself of every opportunity to scold at the Fuggers of Augsburg: "The Fuggers and such like people should get a curb in their snout." Not only Luther, but the great German and Swiss reformers as, for instance, Melanchthon (1497-1560) and Zwingli (1484-1531), were equally opposed to putting money at interest. In 1540, Luther became a little more compliant in this respect, as his book *An die Pfarrhern wider den Wucher zu predigen*, proves.

What most displeased the Hollanders with their sense of reality, was Luther's attitude toward the monarchs. He and his Lutheran Church wholly depended on the petty potentates in Germany. He owed his success not to the excellence and the novelty of his doctrine but to the fact that the worldly powers, for the first time, sided with the heretics, in order to get into possession of the enormous landed properties of the Catholic Church. As a reciprocation Luther did support them. They were, to his opinion, by the grace of God. So the subjects were obliged to obey them even if they were bad. Opposition to a wicked prince who trespassed the laws of nature, leave alone the moral laws of Christ himself, was a grave sin. Tyrants must be tolerated. They were the scourge that God uses to flagellate his sinful people.²⁰

In view of the fact that commerce was the main subsistence of the Dutch population, and commerce could not thrive without freedom of trade, Holland opposed the centralizing tendencies of Charles V which were the prelude the introduction of an absolutist form of government;—the Hollanders could not but reject a religion that granted the monarch unlimited power. The opposition grew to rebellion after the abdication of Charles V, when the Netherlands came to Spain under Philip II, who began his reign with the imposition of the heaviest taxes, the brutal enforcement of the Inquisition, and the persecution of heretics. All three events were a menace to foreign trade.

The further development of the events affirmed how right the Dutch were with their rejection of Lutheranism. In 1566, the Lutheran *Augsburg Confession*²¹ ordered publicly that "the population should obey the ungodly prince." And so while the people were fighting in the streets against the Spanish army, the Lutheran congregation of Antwerp prayed in their churches, accord-

ing to the *Adhortatio* of 1566: "Protect and rule by thy holy Ghost his Imperial Majesty and our most gracious King of Spain."

The Lutherans not only prayed for the tyrant, but even fought for him. On March 15, 1567, the Calvinists, under their minister Modet, tried to persuade the Lutherans to assist them in their fight against the army of Philip II, but the Lutherans preferred to side with the Catholics against the Calvinists in the battle on the banks of the Scheldt near St. Michael's.²²

Still in 1585, Plancius accused the Lutherans of Amsterdam of being hand and glove with the Catholics; and again, in 1604, the Lutherans of Rotterdam were charged with plotting with the papists and the Spaniards to exile the Calvinists from the town.²³

These few details may suffice to prove that Lutheranism was nothing for the Hollanders who had to fight a war to the death against the King of Spain.

Anabaptism. The second infiltration of heretical doctrines into Holland was that of the Anabaptists. The sect had arisen, in 1523, in Zurich among the followers of Zwingli, the Reformer of Switzerland. Anabaptism was the most logical of all Protestant sects. Common to all was the rejection of the intermediation of the Church, in other words, the substitution of an individualist attitude toward the divine for the old collectivist attitude within the Church, but only Anabaptism carried through individualism to the extreme. The principle was: man needs no other light than that of God's word, any intermediation of ministers, even of a church, was superfluous.²⁴

The Dutch people, due to their individualist tendencies, which were visualized in their economy as well as in their religious life—think of the movement of the *Modern Devotion*, the members of which were the Pre-Anabaptists of the fifteenth century—could not but be sympathetic with the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century. Besides, the sect began to spread in Holland just in the right moment. In 1533, Holland was in war with Lubeck. The Baltic Sea was blocked. The grain trade, in those days the most important source of revenue of the Hollanders, was entirely disrupted. The textile industry, with its center in Leyden,

was idle, after England had moved her wool staple to Calais. Because of the enormous import of gold and silver from America, the food prices had gone up in an alarming way. A ton of rye, which, in 1510, had cost ten goldguilders, cost, in 1532, thirty goldguilders. The people who most suffered under the inflation were, as always, the lower classes. The crisis was so crucial that the unemployed proletarians in Leyden prayed: "Oh, gracious Lord, do not pass us over with thy gift, the black death, since we prefer to die at once over starving ourselves to death in time."

Small wonder that especially the famished masses converted to the new sect which coquetted with communism. Besides, some preachers were chiliasts and held out false hopes to the advent of Christ who would inaugurate a millennium of abundance and happiness.

But individualism which was the greatest glory of Anabaptism was at the same time, the element of its decomposition. A sect cannot continue existing without an organization, in other words, without a kind of church, or community. The Anabaptists affirmed their own negation; their self-affirmation was, thus, factually a self-negation.

The history of Anabaptism in the Netherlands was an uninterrupted attempt to solve the insoluble contradiction between individualism and collectivism. It was an incessant floating between the two extremes. Either they indulged in emphasizing the personal attitude of the soul toward God with the inevitable result of a religious degeneration by lack of regulative bindings—think of the Adamites (nudists) in Amsterdam, of the Chiliasts, of the Davidjorists with their lasciviousness, of the Munsterians with their polygamy and their so-called communism—or they emphasized a kind of organization which, of course, strangled the most precious thing of Anabaptism, the personal element.

Kühler has proved that the sect was condemned to split, to decompose, to fall apart incessantly because of the undestructible individualism of its essence. In no church were there so many sects as among the Anabaptists. There were Obbites, Melchiorites, Davidjorists, Batenburgians, Munsterians, Mennonites, Waterlanders, Flemings. The Flemings separated into the Thomas-Bijntgen-Folks, or the Housebuyers; the opponents of

the latter were the Jacob-Kiest-Folks or the Anti-Housebuyers. Other offshoots of the Flemings were the Bankrupts or the Vermeulen-Folks, and still later the Breast-Fumblers. Besides, there were the Groningen and the Danzig Old-Flemings. The Frisians were divided into the Thys-Gerrit-Folks, the Old or the Tough-Frisians, and the Lubbert-Gerrits-Folks, the Weak or the Soft-Frisians, etc. Anabaptism could not live, until it had ceased to live, that is to say, until it had become a tame pastiche of what it formerly was.

We now know the general reasons, why the sect had no future in Holland. The special reasons, why Anabaptism was just as unappropriate as Lutheranism, were the following. The Anabaptists were not allowed to accept government positions and to wear arms, not even in self-defense. For a people, who in the sixteenth century were continuously engaged in commercial wars, and also necessitated to fight for their independence against their legitimate sovereign, Anabaptism was just the thing the Hollanders did *not* want.

The reason why I expatiated to some extent on Anabaptism is that the family of Rembrandt belonged to the Mennonites.

Calvinism. Lutheranism, as we have seen, was the most appropriate religion for the (German) *middle class*. Anabaptism recruited the majority of its followers among the *lower and lowest classes*—think of the revolt of the proletarianized farmers of the south of Germany in 1524-1525; and of the anarchistic community, instituted, in 1534, at Munster i.W. by the Dutch anabaptist John van Leyden. The Lutherans and Anabaptists were, thus, anti-capitalists. The only Protestant religion, that not only tolerated but even recommended capitalism, was Calvinism which began to spread in Holland about 1560. It was founded by John Calvin (1509-1564) and originated in the very wealthy *commercial* town of Geneva.

Wholesale trade was considered by Calvin to be just as beatific as, for instance, agriculture. Moreover Calvin was for many years the only reformer who had no objection to taking interest.

In the second place, Calvin was the only reformer who considered not monarchy but aristocracy to be the ideal form of government. In his *Christianae religionis institutiones* (1543)

he proclaimed: "nullum gubernationis genus beatius" (no form of government is more beatific).

In the third place, Calvinism was the only religion that gave the magistrates ("ephors"), under certain conditions, the right to revolt against their legitimate ruler and made, in definite cases, a revolt even obligatory. Could there be found something more welcome to the Hollanders, when they began their struggle for independence against Spain?

In the fourth place, the dogma of the predestination was a special attraction for the petty bourgeois, who was a mere cypher in the estimation of the Dutch regents. If, however, he belonged to the "elect," he might feel far superior to the members of the ruling class, who because of their unscrupulousness in grabbing and grafting money, could not but belong to the damned. Through the predestination, the petty bourgeois obtained a kind of religious aristocracy as a substitute for the social aristocracy which was unattainable for most of them.

Furthermore, Calvin's doctrine of the supremacy of the church prepared the burghers for their fight against the regents. The religious differences between the two groups of Remonstrants (liberal) and Contraremonstrants (orthodox) were, in fact, not a religious but a political conflict. The religion was nothing but the camouflage for the very material interests that were at stake: the political power in the country.

Finally I have to point to the fact that Calvinism in contradistinction to all the other protestant sects, had an Old-Testament character. As the Jews were God's chosen people, so the Dutch Calvinists held themselves for the people elect of the seventeenth century. Their election entitled them to commit the most heinous cruelties against the "heretics" (the Spaniards) and the "heathens" (the Indonesians), whom they slaughtered singing psalms, in the same way as the Jews exterminated the Philistines.

My conclusion as, if Calvin had not invented Calvinism, without any doubt, would the Dutch people have done so. No religion fitted better into the whole pattern of sixteenth and seventeenth century life in Holland than Calvinism.

What, thus, was decisive in Holland for the apostasy from Rome, the rejection of Lutheranism and Anabaptism, and the wholesale conversion to Calvinism? Nothing but purely material motives: commerce and profit.²⁵

REVOLUTION AGAINST SPAIN

The Dutch historians, with only a few exceptions, have given a too idealized representation of the Reformation in Holland. We do not hear much of the material motives which urged the people to turn away from Rome, of the material reasons why Lutheranism and Anabaptism could not thrive in the Netherlands, and why Calvinism offered the best chances to a country that was to be the center of world trade. The Reformation in Holland was, according to the Dutch historians, over and above all, an unselfish search for religious truth.

The same idealistic interpretation is given to the insurrection of the northern provinces against Spain. The motive of the Eighty Years' War would have been the Freedom of the Fatherland.

Was there in Holland a fatherland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries?

Holland's greatest historian P. J. Blok gives an answer to this question. "No," he writes, "The people of the Netherlands had no fatherland before 1795."²⁶ The fatherland believers could easily bring forward a number of evidences for the existence of a fatherland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (William of Orange, 1533-1584, was called the "Father of the Fatherland," Joost van den Vondel celebrated the burgomasters of Amsterdam as the "Fathers of the Fatherland" etc.), but by closer investigation, it will be evident that only the fiction of a fatherland existed.

Blok understood by fatherland not just the cohabitation of people with the same language and the same uses and customs within definite political borders. Fatherland was for him the subordination of one's private interests to the general interests of the whole. That this was his opinion, may be gathered from the concession Blok made: the Hollanders had no fatherland but a fathertown. He substantiated his negation of a fatherland and the affirmation of a fathertown by pointing to the competition between the towns, to their unfair efforts to get along and to keep the neighboring towns down, to their oppression and exploitation of the rural districts.

Blok was right. But he would have been more consistent, if

he should have denied the existence of a fathertown as well. The same recklessness which was to be found between the towns, existed between the burghers of each town. There was nothing for them but their private profit. When their private profit was at stake, they formed groups independent of their religious convictions, but these groups immediately fell asunder as soon as the common objective was reached. And then it was again "homo homini lupus" (man is a wolf for his fellowmen) as of yore.

The Hollander had only a fatherhouse with a magnificent business-sign, from which he often derived his last name: De Geelvinck (greenfinch), De Pauw (peacock), Het Schaep (sheep), De Graeff (spade), De Tulp (tulipe), De Spiegel (mirror), Het Hooft (head), De Valckenier (falconer), De Reael (Spanish silver coin), etc.

In order to corroborate the adequacy of Blok's negative conception of a fatherland, and my negative conception of a fathertown, I quote the testimony of a man who lived in the most critical period of the sixteenth century in Holland, and who was a professor at the University of Leyden, named Plancius. In his book *De Constantia*²⁷ he deals with the misery of the war and the compassion of the Hollanders on the afflicted "fatherland": This civil war, some people lament, and all the blood that has been shed, and the loss of freedom and justice, are for us a torment. Is that so? Indeed, I see your affliction. But the cause of your affliction seems to me rather questionable. Is it because our fatherland may take a bad turn and end fatally? Actor, do take off your mask! I know too well that you pity only yourself. In the fatherland we love ourselves. Shall I prove this? Is it not remarkable that the greatest love of the fatherland is to be found with the nobles and the rich who would loose all in case the fatherland perishes; and the least love of the fatherland with the mob and the have-nots? Shall I tell you what is behind this fiction fatherland? Lucrus ille deus, your private profit out of which you have made a god."

How right Plancius is, can be best demonstrated by the desperate attempts by the States General (in fact, the Amsterdam merchants) with the assistance of the "Father of the Fatherland," Prince William I of Orange, to sell the beloved fatherland to one or another German, English, or French potentates, pro-

vided the merchants could continue their free enterprise and their private profit, and William of Orange would remain in possession of, respectively, recuperate his immense landed property, situated within the borders of the North Netherlands.

The man who played the leading part in the revolt of the Dutch people against Spain, Prince William of Orange (1533-1548) was a *German* prince, born in the Burg of Nassau-Dillenburg, where, on the day of his birth, the debts were considerably higher than the towers. The intelligent youth got his education at the court of the Emperor Charles V, and converted there, with the permission of his Lutheran father, from Lutheranism to Catholicism. The reason was, that Catholicism was better for his career. After the abdication of the Emperor in 1556, Prince William was appointed stadholder of the provinces North-Holland, South-Holland, and Zeeland, under enormous disadvantages. The Reformation had caused serious ravages in the mind of the population, and the Dutchmen rose more and more overtly against the successor of Charles V, King Philip II of Spain. Prince William was the richest man in the Netherlands. We know that in 1567, the revenues of his landed properties in the Netherlands alone, amounted to the sum of 153,000 livres a year, more than the revenues of all the other members of the Netherlandish high nobility together. Whose part should he take? Siding with the people against the King, would mean exile, if not worse, and confiscation of his land, if the Spaniards should defeat the Dutchmen. William was aware of this, as his letter of February 1566 to Louis of Nassau proves.²⁸ The same fate would meet him, if he sided with the King, and the Dutch people would be victorious. For the moment, the best thing for him to do was to collude with both sides, and wait for the cat to jump. In his letters of the year 1561 to the King and Margaretha, the Governess of the Netherlands, he acted as a devout Catholic and a loyal servant of His Majesty, and in the meantime he held secret intercourse with the rebels and protected the heretics on all occasions. In 1561, he married the princess Anna of Saxony. She was a Lutheran, but he was sure that she would become a Catholic, he wrote in 1560 to Margaretha and Cardinal Granvelle: "Apart from my obligations to the King, my conscience would forbid me to marry a woman,

who had not the intention to convert to the Church.”²⁹ In a letter of the same year to his future father-in-law he promised that his children would be educated “in der wahren Christlichen Religion der Augspurgischen Confession” (in the true Christian religion of the Augsburg confession), thus protestantisch.³⁰ In a letter of 1561 to the Pope,³¹ he professed, “post sanctorum pedum oscula” (after having kissed his holy feet) that he had firmly resolved to eradicate “haeticam pestem” (the heretical pest), in his principedom of Orange “to prove his religious zeal.” Morillon was the first to see through William’s playing a double game, he called him “simulandi ac dissimulandi magnus artifex” (a masterly simulator and dissimulator). And the Cardinal Granvelle, archbishop of Malines and Councillor at the court of Margaretha, bestowed upon him the dishonorable title of “Taciturnus”³² by which he meant a dirty politician. Later the Dutch historians translated the word “taciturnus” into “the Silent,” and as the Silent the German Prince stepped into history.

In 1566, the conditions in Holland compelled Prince William to show his real face. Philip II had sent a Spanish army to the Netherlands under the command of the Duke of Alva to stamp out the heresies and the political rebellion. William had a narrow escape to Germany, his landed properties were seized, and his son forcibly abducted to Spain. The Prince tried to get help from the German Princes Philip and William of Hessen and August of Saxony, who did not show great sympathy for the refugee because of his Catholic faith. But that could be remedied. On July 13, 1567 he wrote a letter to William of Hessen³³ and requested for the strengthening and confirmation of his soul and his conscience, to send him “a sincere, learned, soft-hearted and experienced” minister, who had to show him the Lutheran way to God. Immediately a certain Nicolaus Zell was delegated to Dillenburg, who for six months assisted the princely convert in reading the Bible and singing psalms.

However, the Lutheran God did not bring any grist to Prince William’s mill. Besides he realized that, in the long run, little Holland would never be a match for mighty Spain. And then began a series of machinations to reduce Holland into the vassalage of one of the great European powers. The merchants were not more interested in Holland’s independence, than the Prince

was. What did they care what flag would cover their floating grocery-stores, if only they could make profit.

The first negotiations of William of Orange, with the consent of the government in the Hague, were with England. William divided the Dutch cake into three parts: Holland and Zeeland were destined for England, France would get Flanders and Artois, the rest was reserved for Germany, that is to say, for William of Orange himself. Cf. the letter of August 12, 1571 from Walsingham to Leicester.³⁴

In 1573, William offered Holland and Zeeland to France, after England had refused the present, as the letter of March 23, 1573 from G. de Schonberg to the Queen-mother of France proves.³⁵ In 1575, the prince tried again to bring Holland under the sovereignty of England.³⁶ In 1575 and 1576 he negotiated again with France, this time with the King of France, the Duke of Alencon, and the Catholic Anjou. In 1584, William of Orange negotiated with Henry III of France.³⁷

The Dutch Professor G. L. Muller has made a vain attempt to whitewash the Dutch people. It is true, he asserts, the Hollanders wanted to abandon their freedom, but only because they were fully convinced of the superiority of the monarchic form of government. Muller does not substantiate his gratuitous assumption, nor does he explain, why the Hollanders, in the days of the Twelve Years' Truce (1609-1621), and especially after the Peace Treaty of Munster (1648), did not do away with their republic and found a monarchy? How rejoiced would have been the Princes of Orange, if at long last their monarchic dream had become true.

I have to add here a last fact, which is certainly revealing of the patriotism of the Father of the Fatherland William of Orange. In November 1574 he planned to leave the Netherlands entirely in the lurch. He sent his secretary Brunynck to Jan of Nassau with the following secret instructions: "*Si l'Empereur et les Princes d'Allemagne seroyent contents de donner à son Exc. quelque bien ecclésiastique ou autre en l'Empire pour y demeurer*" (if the Emperor and the German Princes were prepared to present him with one or another ecclesiastic domain in Germany, to spend there his life), he, William, was prepared to give up Holland.³⁸

William was in his four marriages the same politician as he manifested himself on all other occasions of his life. His first wife was the very rich Dutch heiress Anna of Buren. I have mentioned already his second marriage in 1561 with Anna of Saxony. She drank, and amused herself with other men, among them, the father of the famous Rubens. Without divorce William married in 1575, thus on the days of his negotiations with the King of France, with Charlotte of Bourbon, a defrocked nun. William of Hessen wrote on June 15, 1575, to the Elect-prince of Saxony that William had fallen "from the frying pan into the fire."³⁹ Doctor Junius, in a letter of June, 1575, to the Prince of Condé, confirms the political background of the third marriage. The fourth wife of William of Orange was Louise de Coligny, on April 12, 1583. He had married her, as he confessed himself in a letter to the States General, "in order to promote the cause of the Church of Christ [the versatile prince had in the mean time changed his religion for the fourth time, this time from Lutheranism to Calvinism] and an alliance with the Queen of England and the King of Navarre."⁴⁰

The material motives for the revolt against Spain are so obvious and so transparent, and the testimonies of the actors themselves, so numerous, that it is hardly possible to believe in the bona fides of those who continue boasting of the nobility and idealism of the sixteenth century burghers, and the unselfish patriotism of the Father of the Fatherland, William of Orange.

To sum up, the reasons for the revolt were, first, the unbearable taxes imposed already by the Emperor Charles V, and the insolent extortions by the royal bankrupt Philip II, who even tried to tax the foreign merchants who visited Holland for business purposes. Second, the threat of the King to use violence and the execution of his threat by sending the Duke of Alva with an army to introduce absolutism. Third, the reinforcement and the intensification of the Spanish Inquisition, to the effect that a great number of dissenting burghers did no longer feel safe in their country and moved their business to England and later to Germany. Another distressing result of the Inquisition was that Protestant merchants from abroad began to stay away from Holland. But the main motive for the political revolt was the threatening move of world trade from Amsterdam to Emden.

Clement Volckertsz Coornhert wrote in December, 1567, from Emden a letter to Prince William of Orange: "The harbor of Emden was in so perfect a condition that the world trade could do no better than to move to Emden . . . It looks as if Almighty God intends to oppress the Netherlands by converting all that up to date had been gold, into lead; and that he intends to deprive the country of commerce and prosperity. The merchants and the artisans do not require anything but freedom of life and freedom of trade, and certainly will not take any risk from the Spanish Inquisition."⁴¹

To conclude I appeal to Hugo de Groot (1583-1645), Holland's greatest jurist. He was an eye-witness of the second part of the revolution. In his *Parallelon*⁴² he enumerates extensively all the sufferings of the North-Netherlands under Alva, and how the people remained passive, till at last their subsistence was at stake. "Negotiationes tollebantur e medio" (trade was about to move elsewhere). Only then the Hollanders took arms.

HOLLAND IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

ECONOMY

The fact that this chapter starts with an outline of the seventeenth century economy, does not mean that economy is considered to be the exclusive *cause*, and, thus, the explanation of the other happenings in the different realms of life. This would be economism, which is just as unscientific as all the other *catholica*: sociologism, physiologism, biologism, psychologism, sexologism, etc.

Life is a *totalness* which manifests itself in an infinite number of phenomena: economy, society, state, government, law, politics, religion, morale, science, literature, art, music, and so on. The *sense* of each of them can only be disclosed when the historian starts from the totalness. The reason, thus, for the stress on economy in this particular case is that in the seventeenth century, in Holland, economy happens to be the phenomenon in which life itself manifests itself more conspicuously than in the other phenomena.

The great prosperity of Holland began in 1585, after the capture of Antwerp by the Spanish troops under the command of Alessandro Farnese, Duke of Parma. The Hollanders and Zealanders immediately blocked the Scheldt. Herewith Antwerp was doomed to death. In 1560 about 20,000 of its inhabitants had already fled to England before the arrival of the Spanish troops; in 1567, another contingent of about 100,000 had found a sanctuary in Germany; in 1585, the larger number of refugees went to the Netherlands, especially to Amsterdam. Among them were the admirals Dolhain, Lumbres, and Lumey; the vice-admiral Blois de Treslon; the great geographer Plancius; the wholesalers with an European reputation Moucheron, Usselincx, Isaak and

Jacques Le Maire, and Brunel; the mathematician and engineer Stevin; and a number of artists, among them Frans Hals; and Holland's laureate poet Joost van den Vondel.

Holland profited so much by the influx of foreign industrialists that Baasch inflated it to an "industrial revolution."⁴³ The fabrication of satin, velvet, tapestries, upholstery material, furniture, gold-leather, and diamond-cutting, up to then unknown in Holland, soon began to flourish there.

After the closure of the Antwerp harbor, Philip II took countermeasures in 1585, and again in 1591, by closing the Spanish and Portuguese ports for Dutch ships. If they should dare to come too near to the Spanish shore, they were seized and the crew sent to the galleys. The severe measures of the King of Spain cost his country its colonies. As the Hollanders could buy the salt they needed for their herring fishery no longer in Portugal, they sailed to the Cape Verde Islands where there was plenty of salt. From there it was only a couple of miles to Guinea, where the first Dutch ship made its appearance, in 1593. This visit was the inauguration of the trade of gold to Amsterdam, and of negro slaves to the West-Indies. In 1594, the first Hollanders arrived in Brazil; and, in 1595, they discovered salt on the northern coast of South America.

In the mean time, everything was set for a voyage to the Indies. The navigation was no longer an obstacle. For, in 1592, the editor Cornelis Claesz had come into possession of the Portuguese nautical charts. In 1594, Cornelis Houtman who had spied in Portugal brought back the most valuable information, and in the same year, Amsterdam merchants founded the East-Indian "Kompanie van Verra." Zealand, Rotterdam, and Delft soon followed suit by founding their own companies. After Jyn Huyghen van Linschoten who had been in Portuguese service published his *Reysgeschrift van de navigatien der Portugal-oysers in Orienten* (1595), the first Dutch mercantile fleet of four ships sailed eastward under Houtman. The voyage was a perfect failure. But three years later twenty-two ships were fitted out and this time it was a big success.

In 1602, the famous East India Company was founded, to which the other companies were admitted as partners. It was one of the most memorable events of the history of Holland's

economy. It took not many years before the Spaniards and the Portuguese were driven out of the colonies, and then began, what the Hollanders call the "Golden Age." A better name was: "the Age of the Gold," because it was the beginning of the most savage colonial exploitation the world ever witnessed.

The Dutch colonial empire began with the conquest of Amboina and the Moluccas, in 1605; about 1662 the whole of the Indies was in Dutch hands.

In the meantime, the Hollanders had founded a West-Indian company (1621). In 1624, this company had a factory on Formosa; in the same year, a settlement in Brazil; in 1634, they conquered Curacao; in 1642, Tobago; in 1667, Surinam, Esquebo, and St. Eustache. The first Dutch settlement in North-America was on the Hudson, in 1626. The colonies of Africa were of equal importance. In 1624, the West-Indian Company settled in Sierros Leone; in 1641, in S. Paolo de Loanda, S. Thomé and other islands of the Gold Coast; and in 1640, Cape Town fell into Dutch hands.

These few details still do not give us an idea of the world power of little Holland. The Baltic trade ("Oostersche Negotie") had developed to such an extent that in the years 1578-1675, the Dutch ships that passed the Sound, outnumbered by far the ships of all other nations together. According to Walter Raleigh, between 1604 and 1616, only 100 English ships were trading to Elbing, Königsberg, and Danzig, in contrast to 3000 Dutch merchantmen. The same source informs us that 2000 Dutch ships were hardly sufficient for the trade to France, Spain, and Portugal. For the Mediterranean trade ("Straetvaert") about 400 ships were required. About the middle of the seventeenth century, the total number of ships of all nations sailing the seas of the world was 25,000. About 15,000 of them were Dutch ships.

The export of herring assumed likewise big proportions, since Willem Beukelsz. of Biervliet had invented the gutting of herring, in 1380; and especially since 1575 the busses were convoyed to protect them against Dunkirk pirates. The fishing fleet consisted of 3000 busses with a total crew of 50,000 men. The early output brought about 21 to 22 million guilders. The figures can be checked up in Raleigh's *Observations*.⁴⁴

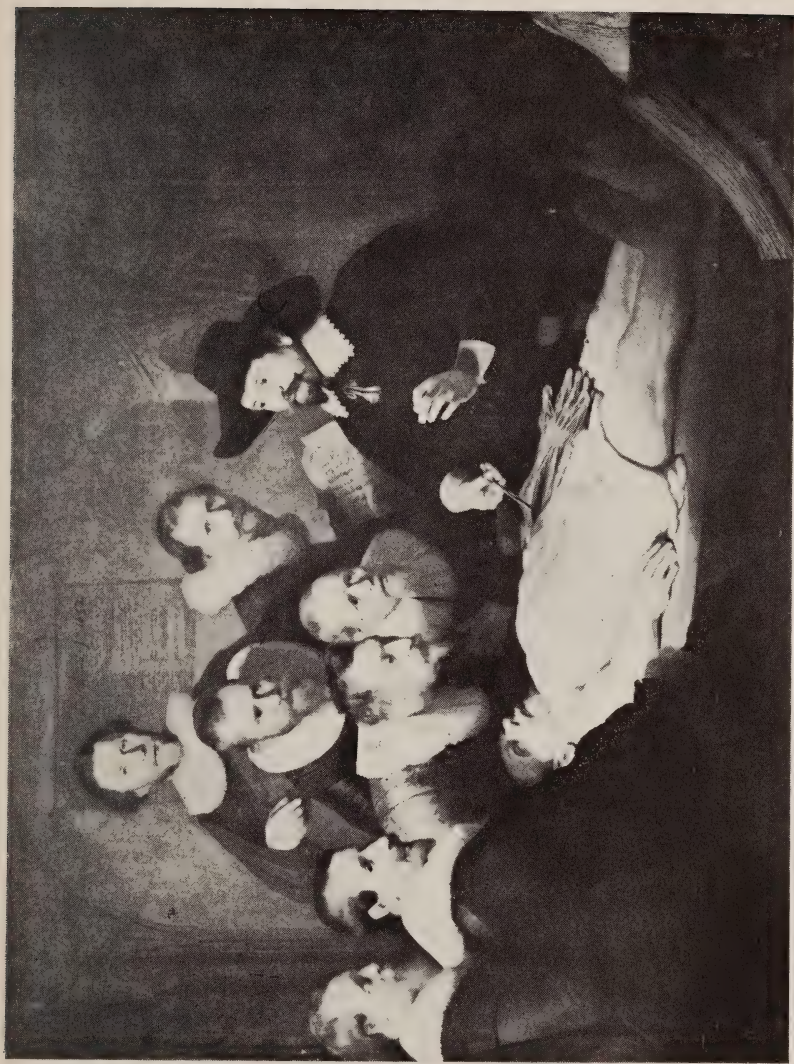
In 1611, whaling started and, in 1614, the "Noorsche Compagnie" came into existence. At the end of the seventeenth cen-

ture, the company had a fleet of 260 ships with a crew of 14,000 on the job.

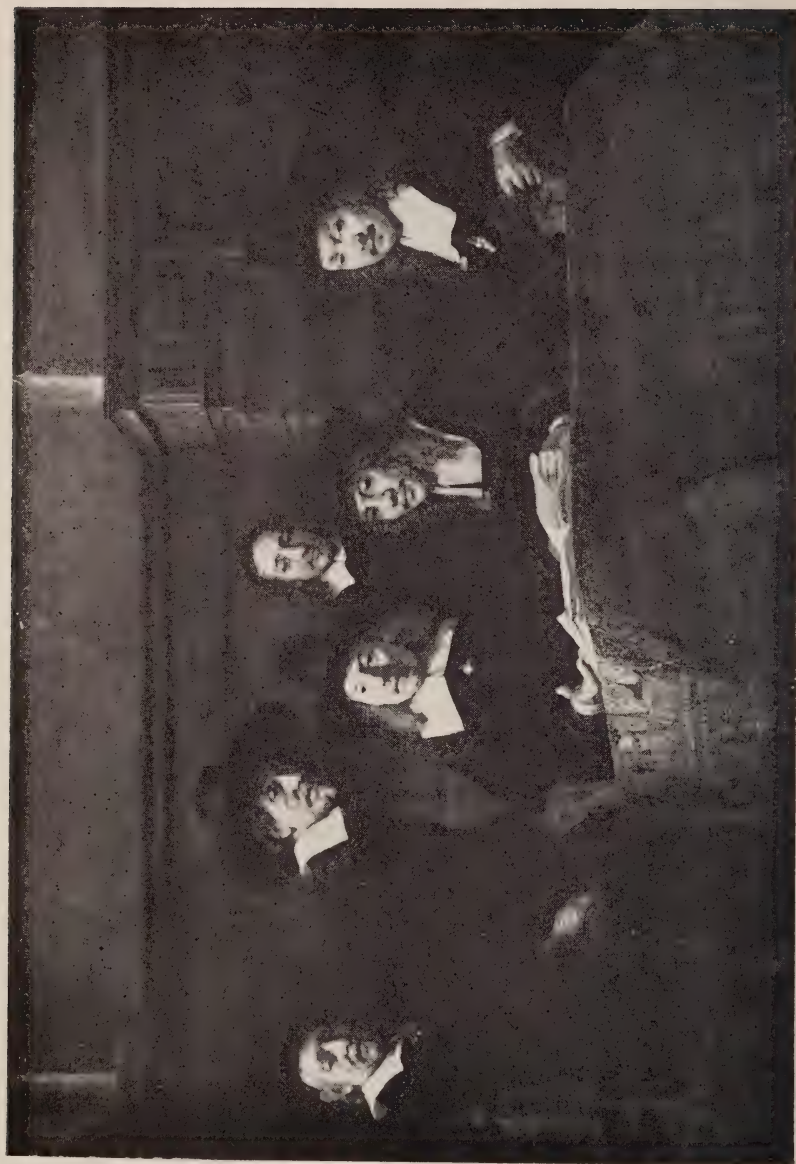
Industry flourished as trade did. I have already mentioned the great many new industries. To give an idea of the size of the biggest manufactories, I will just mention that the silk fabrication in Utrecht employed 500 laborers on the place and 1100 weaving-loom in the town and the surrounding villages. The old industries, oil mills, soap works, breweries, and especially the textile industries in Leyden, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Utrecht, Gouda, and Harlem extended considerably. The output in Leyden alone was, in 1640, 10,805 pieces of cloth; in 1645, 20,409; in 1698, 28,716 pieces. Amsterdam had, in 1605, only three sugar-refineries; in 1661, no less than sixty.

About the wealth of the population we can only guess. Two assessment-lists ("cohiere") of Amsterdam, of the years 1631 and 1674, have come to us. That is all. The figures, however, are unreliable. For instance, the richest man of Amsterdam, in 1631, was the burgomaster Jacob Poppen. He had assessed his fortune on 500,000 guilders. In fact, it was 920,000 guilders. Cornelis van Campen was noted in the list for a fortune of 225,000 guilders. As he shortly died, they found out that he owned 438,000 guilders. We may assume that it was a custom in Holland to cheat the state for about 50% yearly.

We get a better idea of the enormous wealth of the Dutch merchants if we read the list of loans that were contracted in Holland by the European sovereigns. Georges William, Stadholder of Cleve and Electoral Prince of Brandenburg borrowed from Dutch merchants 248,000 guilders at 7%; Henriette Mary, Queen of England and the wife of Charles I got, in 1642, 400,000 guilders from the Rotterdam Loan Office, 300,000 guilders from the Stadholder Frederic Henry, and 50,000 guilders from the States General; Charles Stuart, the later Charles II, tried to borrow 50,000 pound sterling from Amsterdam pledging the Scilly Islands. In 1657, 1658, and 1666 King Frederic III of Denmark owed to the States General a total amount of 1,050,000 guilders, and besides to the town of Amsterdam 870,000 guilders. These figures get their full significance if we take into consideration the value of the guilder in this epoch, the small area of this miniature country, and the relatively thin population.



Rembrandt's Anatomical Lesson of Dr. Tulp, 1632. Prins Mauritshuis. The Hague. Rembrandt breaks away from the Renaissance with his tridimensional non-decorative, but functional composition.



Rembrandt's: The Syndics of the Drapers Guild, 1662, Ryksmuseum, Amsterdam, is Rembrandt's main work. There is no work of the Master where the immediacy of the portrayed is so frightening as in the Syndics

If the reader should conclude from the fantastic economic achievements that the Amsterdam merchants must have been prodigiously intelligent and gifted, he would be sorely mistaken. They were just shrewd, intrepid, and unscrupulous. They were the most materialist materialists of their century. Of course, after they had reached their goals, let me say, from the last decades of the seventeenth century on, they became decent and respectable bourgeois satisfaits, and paragons of impeccable conservatism.⁴⁵

SOCIETY

Nobility did no longer play any part in the seventeenth century society in Holland. Most of them were impoverished. The towns had incorporated most of the manors of the surrounding area: Leyden, for instance, incorporated the manors of Oegstgeest, Poelgeest, Leyderdorp, Stompwijk, and Zoeterwoude; Amsterdam the manors of Nieuwer-Amstel, Ouderkerk, Diemen, Sloten, Kudelstaart, Leymuyden, Vriezekoep, Vollewijk, and the islands Urk and Emmeloord. Or the estates were bought by the merchants not only for the enjoyment of their life, and for the display of their wealth, but mostly to get into possession of the noble title annexed to the estate. How proud the nouveaux riches were, may be gathered from the many family portraits with the château in the background. A typical example is the picture of the family van Meerbeeck Cruywaghen by Jacob van Loo in the Rijksmuseum of Amsterdam. Of the artists who were specialists for this kind of tableaux I mention only de Keyser, Flinck, Doncker and Luttichuys. The complement to the paintings were the rhymed descriptions of the pleasure-grounds by the owners themselves: Huygens' *Hofwyck*, Cats' *Sorgvliet*, Pieter de Honde's *Dapes inemptae of de Moufenschans*, Westerbaen's *Ockenburgh*, d'Outrein's *Rosendael*, van Someren's *Groepenstein*, Rotgans' *Kromwijk*, Berman's *Batestein*, and many more.

It was very unfortunate for the old nobility that there was no court in the Netherlands, where they could find board and lodging and an appanage for their decorative presence. So they moved to foreign countries. I have been told that only three of the old noble families survived the twilights of the ancient gods; all the rest who nowadays call themselves noble in Holland, be-

long to the nutmeg nobility of the seventeenth century. They had bought a manor with a title, or just a title from the French, English, Italian, or German courts. As early as the beginning of the seventeenth century the French Ambassador de Buzamval complained of the "epidemic" in Holland: every grocer wanted to become a "chevalier."

The social position of the Protestant churchmen—the "dominés" as they were called—was in the seventeenth century absolutely irrelevant. It could not be else, thanks to the disestablishment of church and state. During the whole of the seventeenth century, no dominé has ever had a seat in the magistrature of one of the towns, in the Provincial States, leave alone, in the States General. Of course, this does not mean that they were not interested in, or that they did not occupy themselves with politics.

Outside their community the dominés did not enjoy great esteem. The reasons were the following. The protestant ministers originated from the lower and lowest classes. One of the regents once expressed that with the impolite words: "They have bubbled up from the dregs of the unmannered mob."⁴⁶ There can be no doubt about that in the last quarter of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century, no son of a merchant would ever have thought of studying divinity. They left this profession to impecunious boys who got scholarships at the Theological College of the University of Leyden, where life was anything but edifying. In October 1594, for instance, the future dominés revolted and even killed a bailiff. Up to 1684, there was no end to complaints of "excesses, disorders, committed by students of theology."⁴⁷ In view of these facts, it will not surprise any one, when they later scold at each other, from the pulpit: "bean-pole," "Babok," or "ass," as the ministers Maccovius and Gommarus did. Calvin himself had invectived the Dutchman Coornhert as a "dull, blunt despiser of God's word," a "cur," a "hog," a "beast," and compared Coornhert's book with "the hindmost of a monkey." The Dutch Calvinist ministers even dared to call the widow of Prince William of Orange an "Arminian harlot," because of her sympathy with the doctrine of the liberal Calvinism of Jacob Arminius (1560-1609).

The Navy Lists of the East-India Company are very instruc-

tive of the social evaluation of the dominés by the merchants. First came the skipper, then followed in rank the chief mate, then came the second and third mate with the barber, who was at the same time the surgeon on board. Only then followed the second barber and . . . the minister. The latter did not get more sold than the boatswain. The lowest ranks were those of the boatsman's mate and the boatswain's mate.

In the villages, the dominés worked as day-laborers, as carriers, or as tax collectors. Some operated a distillery and sold liquors. Their wives many times ran a little shop or peddled with a basket on their arm throughout the region. In 1626, a certain Jan Pietersen sailed on the Utrecht to West-India. He had been mustered as a "gunner and spiritual adviser."⁴⁸ The worst of all were the missionaries, who went to India to preach the Gospel. Francois Valentijn, a pastor himself gives us in his book⁴⁹ a lot of information. According to him their main occupation was making money. They lived as grands seigneurs. "A pastor used to keep twenty slaves: one for his parasol, one for his pipe. They were always around him. His wife was likewise accompanied by two slaves, one for the parasol, another for the areca-box. Every child had its nurse and besides its parasol bearer. Besides there were in the house a cook, two boys for the laundry, a needle-woman, a tailor, a shoemaker, two boys to carry wood from the forest, and one 'may dicasa,' a housekeeper with the key-basket." Slaves cost eighty to one hundred six-dollars. "Girls with a fine face and a bright skin" were most expensive. tells us Valentijn. Professor Knappert⁵⁰ reports: "but a few exceptions, the missionaries of the first half of the seventeenth century were an incivilized bunch," who mostly played a tragicomical part, for instance, the former shoemaker dominé Remmet Ringius; Caspar Willems who dealt untactfully with the high-born natives; dominé Dubbeldijk "who walked in the way of sin"; dominé du Praet who was a slave-driver; dominé Wouter Melchiorisz who was the best customer of his distillery and his pot-house; dominé Dankaarts who was a notorious smuggler. Dominé Valentijn himself was not much better. He advised the government to inebriate the chiefs of the dessas to make them "sing," and, on another occasion, he regretted that the natives when tortured succumbed so soon.

In Holland, during the seventeenth century there were only two classes: the burghers and the farmers. The burgher class was divided into the rich bourgeoisie with the regent families, and the petty bourgeoisie (artisans and little shopkeepers). There was no solidarity among them. How could it be in a country where only private interest prevailed? Even during the Eighty Years War, the burghers and the occasional groups of burghers, were concerned solely for themselves. Each province tried to back out, when there was a question of contributions to the war effort. The letters of William of Orange are full of bitter complaints of the Dutch avarice. Hugo de Groot (1583-1645) likewise assures us: "The people of the Netherlands were incredibly stingy. . . . The war would have been an utter failure if not the Spaniards had been so insolvent."

The rivalry between the provinces was excelled by the rivalry between the towns. The flourishing town of Muyden was in course of time entirely ruined by Amsterdam. Broek-in-Waterland, a seaport with its own thriving corn trade to the Baltic, with its own whaling, its own herring fishing, even with its own trade to the West-Indies, was debased by Amsterdam to a little cheese village, in a couple of years. In 1612, Amsterdam charged the Admiralty of Horn with corruption, but not because the Amsterdam merchants felt scandalized. We shall see later that the Horn corruption was the merest trifle compared with the wholesale corruption in Amsterdam. The purpose of the capital was to strangle the competition of Horn in the West-Indies and the Levant. Amsterdam sabotaged the ship-yards of Zaandam for the same purpose. All this was done deliberately and systematically. We know this from Gerrit Schaap Pietersz.' *Alloquium ad filios* (Amsterdam, 1655). He advised his sons "to try to make the little neighboring towns as Muyden, Naarden, etc. dependent on or submissive to Amsterdam by buying plots in their townships, by advancing loans, and so on. Amsterdam should attempt to control the Zuyderzee, the town and the castle of Muyden by pushing their candidate for the office of High-Bailiff. They should sabotage the ship-yards in the surrounding of Waterland."⁵¹ The same destructive policies were carried through in all other parts of the country. Gouda, Harlem, and Dordrecht obstructed the inland navigation of Rotterdam to

the Rhine and to Amsterdam. Delft left no stone unturned till Delfshaven was put out of the way.

Within the towns, the home-homini-lupus principle was applied whenever possible. The merchants were always of one mind with each other in putting the financial burden on the small people. Hugo de Groot recommended in his *Nederlandtsche Jaerboeken en Historien*⁵² to levy taxes on every thing, "landed properties, houses, victuals, clothing, personnel," trade, however, should be exempt from taxation. Pieter de la Court⁵³ thinks that "imposts and excises are necessary, but tolls and tributes are noxious." The Amsterdam merchants were fanatic adherents of the free-trade system, because they profited by it. But they were the most narrow-minded protectionists as far as the shopkeepers and artisans were concerned. During the Twelve Years' Truce (1609-1621) they made a few concessions. Why? Ernst Baasch gives us the answer: "only to reconcile the small people to free-trade." The merchants needed the petty bourgeoisie for their anti-governmental policy.

Another grievance of the middle-class was the exemption of the great industries (as breweries, distilleries, oil-mills, soap-works, refineries, textile industries, and especially the new industries, as silk-mills and hat manufactories) from the guild-obligations, with the result that the old members of the guilds were no longer able to compete with the big bosses. So the guilds lost their last rest of independence.

The attitude of the merchants toward the guild masters has been best described by Pieter de la Court.⁵⁴ The guild masters should be kept down, because they are interested only in the welfare of the members. They can become a danger for the magistrates. Besides, the guild masters are "as a rule political blunderheads, ill-bred, uneducated, without any experience of life, and often foreigners without great fortune, so that they have nothing to lose in time of a revolution or of war. Worst of all is that their concern for the guild brothers is at the expense of their fellow-citizens." By fellow citizens were meant the regents.

Hardly did a year pass without revolts. In 1607, Amsterdam was obliged to forbid all kind of guild meetings. In 1618, there was fighting between the weavers, dyers, and fullers in the

capital. In 1638, there was an insurgence of the furriers in the capital. In the next year the States of Holland decreed a lock-out of workmen who ever had participated in a strike. This is the more significant, when we know that just then the wages were extremely low. The employers themselves conceded that the laborers could not live without relief, and could not buy fuel even when they were fully employed. In 1643, the masters of the clothiers' guilds of eight towns came together to settle differences and to draft lists of locked-out strikers. In 1657, 1661, and 1663, the magistrate of Amsterdam was again urged to abolish the freedom of assembly. A revolt of the furriers broke out in Amsterdam, in 1659. In 1672, Harlem lived to see new insurrections. In 1681, Amsterdam decreed that riotous crowds would be punished by public lashing, or imprisonment; and in 1692, that even capital punishment would be inflicted. Nevertheless the Amsterdam textile workers revolted, in 1696. After three days of street-fighting, the ring-leaders were hanged.⁵⁵

Behind these disorders were many times people with communistic ambitions. Pieter de la Court assures us in *Interest van Holland* that "the workers tried to introduce community of goods." The Quakers, too, professed and practiced pre-communistic theories, and were therefore persecuted. Not before Europe, with their lust for infinite motion and splendour, met 1675, they got freedom of religious services after they had disavowed their "heretic" theories on the subject of private property.

The citizens of the towns, whether rich or poor, were thick as thieves together in their attitude toward the rural population. Since the beginning of the sixteenth century, the farmers were oppressed as nowhere else. They were compelled to sell their products in the nearest town. Since 1531, the prices were fixed by the magistrature. All trades were prohibited in the villages situated within the town line, in order to protect the town people against competition. The towns did what they could to increase the rural taxes. The impoverishment of the peasants, in the course of the whole seventeenth century, has to be imputed to the brutal extortions and exploitation by the town people. The situation on the land became still more crucial after the rich burghers had begun to invest a part of their fortune in polders.

How the burghers disdained the peasants, may be gathered from a number of proverbs by de la Court in *Politike Weeg-schaal*.⁵⁶ "Unge il villano e ti pungera, punge il villano e t'ungera (salve a peasant and he will beat you up; beat him up and he will salve you). Nourry le corbeau il te crevera les yeux" (Feed a crow and he will pick out your eyes). "Chantez a l'asne il te donnera des pets" (Sing to a donkey, and he will respond with kicks). "Kraawd een Boer en hy sal in u hand bijten" (Caress a boor, and he will bite your hand). In another place the very dignified de la Court advises his compatriots: "Peasants were from the very outset rascals and scoundrels, for they were *pagani*, pagans, the scum of the earth, so who does well to them, does evil to God, as the proverbs prove: Son villacos. Ne sont que des vilains (They are just villains). Sunt pecora campi (They are nothing but cattle)."

The class of the workers has already been dealt with. The rest of the population, who were standing entirely outside the process of production, should be called mob, rabble. They recruited themselves from discharged or disabled sailors, veterans, pauperized home workers, farmers, and land-loupers. They were a real plague for the country. Finally special sheriffs were appointed, who hounded on them with armed troopers and foot-soldiers. The great number of placards (1607, 1611, 1612, 1614, 1619, 1626, 1648, 1654, 1655, 1658, 1682, and 1695) speak volumes.

They used to play a part where ever there were disorders, for instance, during the butter revolts of the year 1624, in the sailors' mutinies of 1629 and 1652, and repeatedly in the riots by the Contra-Remonstrants against the Amsterdam magistrates.⁵⁷ Pastor Smout only wanted to warn from the pulpit (as he did on April 16, 1626) : "If the gentlemen of the town-hall do not better fulfill their duties, the children, nay, even the cobbles will rise to serve the Lord," and immediately the streets were broken up and the cobbles of the Lord flew through the windows of the impious regents.⁵⁸ On many occasions, the mob did the dirty work for the merchants, for instance, in 1572, when two of Holland's greatest statesmen, Jan de Witt and his brother Cornelis de Witt, were dragged from the Gevangenpoort (a prison) in the Hague and publicly slaughtered by the rabble in the most bestial way.

GOVERNMENT

Economy cannot function in an efficient way unless it is organized. The organization of the economy within a certain territory (State), is called government. It follows from this that the form of government will change as soon as the economic structure changes. The truth of this principle, as far as Holland is concerned, may be verified in the works of P. J. Blok, and especially in the manual by Gosses and Japikse.⁵⁹

As long as Holland's economy was based on agriculture and fishery, the center of gravity was in the country. The counts were in complete control. We have seen that fishery, already in an early period, developed into carrying trade, and carrying trade became regular commerce, which was soon of greater momentum than agriculture. The result was that the economic center shifted from the country to the towns, and the power of the sovereign began to decrease in proportion to the increase of the power of the merchants.

The towns in Holland were, during the twelfth century, still ruled by the bailiff and the aldermen, who were appointed by the count. Within a short time in each town a council (of City Fathers) was instituted, which from 1400 was elected by the prominent merchants without interference of the counts. So the balance of power shifted gradually in favor of the Council, till, about 1500, the bailiff and the aldermen were confined exclusively to justice. The Council filled its vacancies by cooptation or by nomination, but still needed the approbation of the court, respectively, of the stadholder. This approbation subsided, after Holland had declared itself independent of Spain (1579).

In Amsterdam, the outgoing burgomasters and aldermen elected three new burgomasters who adopted a fourth one from those who had to retire. Only members of the regent families were eligible. Municipal government was, consequently, aristocratic, more precisely, oligarchic.

The Provincial States were likewise ruled by the regent families. The States of Holland, for instance, consisted of eighteen delegates of the eighteen towns with eighteen votes; the delegates of the nobility had altogether one vote. We see that the nobles were as early as the sixteenth century a "non-valeur."

The delegates of the Provincial States could not take any decision for themselves, they were strictly bound to their mandates. Decisions were taken by simple majority, for matters of finance, however, unanimity was required.

The government of the whole country (all the seven provinces) was the States General of the "sovereign provinces." Their competence was: foreign affairs, war and peace, exercise of the eminent domain, government of the conquered countries, general laws, appointment of ambassadors, field-m Marshals, consuls, etc. In all matters of vital importance (finances, war and peace) unanimity of votes was necessary.

In fact, Amsterdam ruled the country. If decisions were taken in the States General or the Provincial States, which Amsterdam did not like, Amsterdam refused the appropriations or just ignored the laws, fully aware that nothing could be done, since the States had no executive power to enforce the laws.

The great jurist, Hugo de Groot, fully approved of the "aristocratique regieringe," or the "regieringh der notabelen," a government by persons of note or distinction. In his *Parallelon Rerum publicarum*⁶⁰ he explains that the "notables" were for him: "the wisest and the richest." In his *Nederlandtsche Jaerboeken*⁶¹ Hugo de Groot elucidates this: "In a republic which is entirely depending on the sea and the water-ways, it cannot be else." Common burghers could not come into consideration for government positions. The Grand Pensionary Oldenbarnevelt, likewise, advocated an aristocratic form of government: "The worst, the most noxious and pernicious thing that could happen to the State or the town, would be if the people should lay down the law. . . . My fifty years experience have taught me that it is better to be tyrannized by the classes than by the masses (better verheerd dan verknecht)."

I pass over the theories of the Dutch scholars of the seventeenth century in political sciences, as Graswinckel, Boxhorn, and others, who all professed de Groot and Oldenbarnevelt's theories.⁶² But it is of importance for us to discuss the political theories of Spinoza, were it only to prove the inanity of the assertion that Spinoza lived outside the reality,⁶³ that his philosophy was timeless; and the nonsense of Carl Gebhardt's assertion that Spinoza's doctrine was "baroque," thus absolutist.⁶⁴

Spinoza stood with both feet firmly on the ground, and at that, on Dutch ground, besides Spinoza was anti-absolutist. It is true that Spinoza started in his earliest period from the great philosopher of absolutism, Hobbes (1588-1679), whose main works on this subject were *De Cive*, *The Elements of Law* (1640), and *Leviathan* (1650); but soon Spinoza went his own way. We find his political doctrine in his *Tractatus theologico-politicus* (1670) and in *Tractatus politicus* which was published after his death in 1677.

Hobbes asserts that the state of nature has ceased to be, after men had drawn up an *irrevocable* social contract. This was the origin of the State, within which the form of the political power has been statuted by majority of votes. The best form of state is, according to Hobbes, the monarchy with a ruler with absolute power. In a letter of 1674, Spinoza demonstrates the "essential differences" between his and Hobbes' political theories. Spinoza agrees that the State is a human institution but denies the irrevocability of the transfer of power. The state of nature has *not* ceased to exist. The power of the government is *not absolute*. The State has only so much power as it surpasses the power of the subjects.

The reason for the institution of the State is, to the opinion of Hobbes, to secure life; to the opinion of Spinoza, to secure life plus to protect the freedom of the mind. Hobbes' political theory leads to absolutism, or rather, is absolutism in the most radical form, thus, not only in the domain of the State but also in the domain of science, religion, and the arts. Spinoza's political theory leads to democracy. Only democracy offers the best guarantee for the freedom of thinking. That democracy is diametrically opposed to absolutism, needs no further elucidation. Although Spinoza preferred democracy at large, he recommended, with a view to the very particular conditions in Holland, that the actual aristocratic form of State in Holland should not be changed abruptly. What could be done for the moment, he wonders? Nothing but a gradual democratization of aristocracy. This was also the opinion of Pieter de la Court⁶⁵ and of Jan de Wit (1625-1672). The magistrature of the towns should be no longer the privilege of the regent families, and the States General were to be sovereign, in other words, the right of veto

as well as the imperative mandate of the delegates ought to be abolished. The merchants were so upset, that they put Jan de Wit in prison and connived at his violent death by the rabble of The Hague.

The aristocratic form of government had two more opponents, to wit, the Calvinist petty bourgeoisie, and the Princes of Orange. The middle class based its opposition on Calvin's *Christianae religionis Institutiones* (1541); and the Princes of Orange on Johannes Althaus' (or Althusius): *Politica methodica digesta* (1603). The Calvinists wanted a *theocracy*; Althaus a kind of *Caesaro-Papism*.

The Calvinist ministers argued in the following way. It is undeniable that Calvin has taught that aristocracy is superior to any other form of government. But Calvin said so on the assumption of an aristocracy submitted to the Calvinist church, as it was the case in Geneva. Calvin, thus, virtually recommended not aristocracy but theocracy. The Dutch regent families were as a rule liberals hence the opposition of the dominés and their beatific parishioners.

We now understand Pieter de la Court's hatred of the dominés, who played off religion against the regents to get the power in the State. In his *Politike Weeg-Schael*⁶⁵ he lashes the dominés in the following words: "These political zealots who are always so interested in the welfare of the country, and these sanctimonious guys who are always talking about conscience, God, and his holy word, are not content with the qualifications: honest and sincere, they even want to be called saints. Since after the proverb: *hommes ne sont anges, mais jeunes Angelots sont vieus Diablots* (men are not angels, but nice young angels are later mostly old devils), the scoundrel suddenly peeps through the folds of his hypocritical garb. In their old days these fine guys turn out to be not angels but old devils, who with their slogans: conscience, God's glory, and welfare of the country, cover up their stinking pots and play the hypocrites. They have used the slogans: *Salus Populi*, the sacrosanct Law, and God's word, to cheat the small people. The clergymen have only to cough, and the people immediately respond: Amen!"

The Princes of Orange were always on the side of the small bourgeoisie. Were they really orthodox Reformed Calvin-

ists, and did they try to found a "civitas Dei" (Kingdom of God) in Holland? By no means! They did not care for religion. William of Orange was a Lutheran, converted to Catholicism, reconverted to Lutheranism, and, in 1573, he became a Calvinist. His religions were politics, as his four marriages were. His son Maurice of Orange pretended to be a fervent Calvinist, only he did not know, as he said himself, whether Predestination was "blue or green." But the Oranians were on the side of the burghers, because the latter were their brothers in arms against the regents. What the Oranians wanted, was the sovereignty over the country, nothing else. And the philosopher Althaus was a lackey in their service.

Althaus was a native of the County of Wittgenstein-Bredenburg, which bordered on the County of Nassau-Dillenburg, the cradle of the Oranges. The rulers of both countries were close relatives. Althaus was a professor at the Nassau University of Herborn-Siegen, his Prince Philip William was the brother of Prince Maurice, Stadholder of Holland. Although Althaus became later a counsellor of Count John VI of Nassau, he moved to Emden where he got the office of a syndic, but he remained in contact with the Princes of Nassau, for instance, with William Louis, Stadholder of Friesland. The latter offered him two times (in 1607 and 1610) a professorship at the University of Franeker. In 1603 Althaus published his main work in *Politica methodica digesta*, which contained in Cap. XXV an Eulogy: "Wilhelmus of Orange-Nassau as he actually was." According to Althaus, sovereignty is based on the will of the people. The people, however, was for him not a handful of aristocrats, but the great masses of Calvinists!

LAW

The means which the State employs for the enforcement of its authority and the pursuit of its objectives (organization of the economy), are, of course, dependent on the objectives. Consequently the introduction of new laws, the abrogation or the amendment of old laws, will for a large part depend on eventual changes in the economic structure.

It would be a waste of time and a boredom for the reader,

to substantiate these truths by analyzing the placards which the Government of Holland drew up in the course of the seventeenth century. Interesting, however, is to trace how the changes in economy dictated even *international* laws.

Holland has the honor of having been the first country to initiate international law, and the man who pioneered in this field was Hugo de Groot (Grotius) 1583-1645. His main works on this subject are *De jure praedae Commentarius* (Commentary on the right of booty), written in the years 1604 and 1605, published for the first time in 1868; *Mare liberum* (the open sea), which was originally the Twelfth Chapter of *De jure praedae Commentarius*. It was published in 1609. His third work is *Inleiding tot de Hollandsche Rechtsgeleerdheid*, written in 1620, published in 1631. His fourth work *De jure belli ac pacis* was finished in 1625.

The motive of the first work *De jure praedae* was the following. In 1603, Jacob Heemskerck, a captain in the service of the East-India Company, had seized the Portuguese carack Catharina which was sailing from Macao to Malacca. A few participants of the Company and a small number of Government officials had scruples about the right to this predatory action. De Groot informs us: "There are irresolute people who from a religious standpoint deny the right to booty, which they think to be unlawful and illegal. Then there are others who do not call in question the lawfulness but are afraid that booty might impair Holland's reputation. And finally a third group of people, although they are convinced of the right of booty, and do not think that Holland's reputation might suffer, are wondering whether the action that seems to be profitable might turn out a loss later."

To appease these waverers the directors of the East-India Company engaged the only twenty years old Hugo de Groot, who at that time was a lawyer in the Hague, to justify the capture of the vessel and clear the way for further raids.

I must insert a few quotations, because *De jure praedae* sometimes makes the impression of a plea by a lawyer who has been paid to defend a case in which he himself does not believe. I have too high an opinion of the author's intelligence as to assume that he has taken many of his arguments seriously.

In Chapter XV, he asserts that booty is one of the benefits that God bestows upon pious people, to show his benevolence and their election. Besides he reminds us, when men have enriched themselves in this "legal" way, what a lot of good can they do to other people? "Is not it essential to a State, to have as many as possible wealthy citizens?"

Onno Damsté who translated de Groot's work into Dutch, wondered why the East-India Company never published the manuscript. He conjectured that the work had already lost its timeliness in 1605. I rather think that even the directors of the Company fought shy of the book which indeed proves too much.

What interests us more, is de Groot's *Open Sea*. Here again the author proves his point for the main part by quotations from the Bible, the Holy Fathers, and the Classics. In Chapter II, de Groot reasons: "Right is, what God has made known as his will." So we have only to investigate what the intention of God was when he created the world. This intention is clearly expressed in the nature of the things. What now do we see in nature? God has not willed that nature produce all kinds of things everywhere. Some people have an abundance of one kind of products, some people an abundance of other things. The intention of God is manifest. All people with their different needs and different riches should be dependent upon each other. If everything should grow everywhere, there would be no familiar intercourse. Therefore, it is the will of God, that there is freedom of the seas and freedom of trade.

But de Groot has still more blunt arrows in his theological quiver to prove the freedom of the seas. "The ocean that God has laid out around the earth is navigable in *all* directions." Could God have revealed his will in a more manifest way, de Groot exclaims? Furthermore, the trade winds—blowing from North-East to South-West on the north side of the equator; and from South-East to North-West on the south side of the equator—are blowing in different directions. "Do not these facts prove convincingly," de Groot asks, "that the world is open to all peoples" and that the seas are free?

But, in the year 1610, something surprising happened. The English complained of Dutch busses that were fishing off the

English shores. If the sea is open to all nations, according to de Groot and the States General, the Dutch fishers were strictly in their rights.

For all that, the Dutch Government made a withdrawal. And why did the States General suddenly except the territorial waters from the open sea? Because this was, in 1610, more advantageous to Holland. Open sea and open territorial waters had been a great help for the Hollanders in the days of the *conquest* of the East-Indies; after the conquest of the principal islands, open sea with *closed* territorial waters was preferable for the *defense* of the islands against the Portuguese and the English fleets who were eager for the Dutch colonies.

In 1625, Hugo de Groot abandoned his theory. In his *De jure belli ac pacis* of this year, he declares: "et mare occupari potuisse ab eo qui terras et latus utrumque possideat" (that the seas can be occupied by the power that rules the lands on both sides of the sea). And not only occupation, but even a sovereignty was possible, if the sea was domineered by display of power from the coasts or by fleets. So the freedom of the sea existed thenceforth only there where no State exercises any power.

B. M. Telders⁶⁶ in his article: "De oorsprong van het leerstuk der territoriale zee" looks for the reason of de Groot's new theory, in fishery disputes between Holland and England. The reason did not float about in the North Sea, but somewhere in the Indian Ocean. The Hollanders were then at the top of their might. So, from now on, there could only be a question for them to keep the other powers as far as possible away. The Open Sea, therefore, was again closed. In 1635, John Selden published his *Mare clausum* (the Closed Sea).

POLITICS

The domestic and foreign politics in Holland during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were purely commercial politics. It was a view on the world from the window of an Amsterdam business office. The resolutions of the Provincial States and the States General were hardly ever taken for the sake of the whole country, but just on behalf of the Amsterdam

trade. The merchants even did not shrink for liquidating their own statesmen, who dared to place the welfare of the country above the interests of a handful of merchants. The Grand Pensionary Oldenbarnevelt, one of the greatest men of Holland, was decapitated. Hugo de Groot, their greatest jurist, would have been treated in the same way, had he not escaped in the nick of time from the castle Loevestein where he was imprisoned. After his rescue he was exiled for life. The Grand Pensionary Johan de Witt and his brother Cornelis were incarcerated and lynched by the mob with connivance of the authorities. How guilty these four men were, may be gathered from the facts that, after death, the grateful fatherland erected statues to their honor, and that all Dutch textbooks nowadays sing their immortal glory.

The Dutch historians P. J. Blok, Fruin, and many others, have dealt with the politics of the seventeenth century so objectively and so copiously, that I may suffice to report in rough outlines only a few of the most salient samples of the selfish Amsterdam machinations. *Ex uno disce omnes* (from these few judge of the rest).

I have already mentioned that, in 1567, Philip II had sent the Duke of Alva with an army of 10,000 troops to the Netherlands and soon the hostilities began. Amsterdam, however, was the only town that refused to fight. It sat upon the fence and played a waiting-game. The capital was, for the time being, interested only in the grain trade to the Baltic and not in the Mediterranean trade, so the best thing to do was to play safe and wait. Only in 1578, it became clearer and clearer that the capital could do better business when it would fight with the rest of the country against Spain than remaining neutral, and then Amsterdam turned "gueux."

In the year 1585, Holland negotiated with England for help against Spain. The English minister, Leicester, demanded from the Seven Provinces to participate in the blockade of Spain. The merchants of Amsterdam refused, because this would mean the end of their very lucrative business with the enemy. Their profit came first, the country came only in the second place. Up to 1596, Amsterdam obstinately refused to comply with the wishes of the States General and the English Government.⁶⁷

In 1599, Amsterdam gave up its isolational standpoint, not for the sake of the common welfare, but because Spain had confiscated so many Dutch ships that the Spanish trade had left them no longer any encouraging margin.

In 1607, Oldenbarnevelt opened peace talks with Spain, which after two years resulted in a truce. Who were against peace? The Amsterdam merchants, because Spain had stipulated that the Hollanders should desist from piracy. Besides, Spain had demanded the withdrawal of all Dutch ships from the Indies.

In 1633, the notorious Liga of the Bickers began its disastrous plotting. Four brothers bossed the whole capital. They traded with the enemy, provided him with weapons, ammunition, ships, in a word, with all he needed to fight Holland. The Bickers, burgomasters of Amsterdam, were for many years the gentlemen murderers of their fellow-citizens.

In 1639, Frederic Henry, the Stadholder of Holland and Zealand, thought that it was now the most favorable time to conquer the South-Netherlands on Spain. The first step in this direction ought to be the conquest of Antwerp. Of course, Amsterdam was vehemently opposed as it had formerly been opposed to the same plan of Prince Maurice. The harbor of Antwerp was undeniably better than the harbor of Amsterdam, and so the result of the conquest of Antwerp might be that the center of world trade would move back to Antwerp. Frederic Henry was infuriated. He threatened the capital, in presence of the Count d'Estrades:⁶⁸ "Once I get Antwerp, I shall fling down Amsterdam so deeply that it will never more be able to recover."

Amsterdam even succeeded to keep the Scheldt closed after the Peace Treaty of Munster i.W., in 1648, and against the recommendations of Prince William II, the successor of Frederic Henry.

In 1644, the States General and Frederic Henry decided to remain neutral in the war between Sweden and Denmark. Amsterdam wanted war on the side of Sweden to get rid of the Sound Toll which weighed so heavily on Amsterdam.

And so it continued throughout the rest of the century. Amsterdam was minded only of its particular interests.⁹⁶

MORALE

Good and bad are evaluations, respectively devaluations, of human actions on the basis of one or another standard. There are no standards written in heaven, in other words, there are no absolute standards. They are all the work of man, thus subjective. If man has the right to put up standards, he has also the right to reject or to change standards. Of course, at his own risk. If he considers one of his acts good, and the majority of the people among which he lives, considers it as an evil, he will have to face the music.

Standards have changed continuously throughout the ages and will always change. Morals have been considered everywhere and at any time as one of the principal expedients for reaching certain material objectives, which most of the time are camouflaged as religious objectives. Celibat, for instance, was introduced in the Catholic Church, at the end of the eleventh century, to stop and to prevent the dissipation of ecclesiastical good as soon as trade began to revive.

The general moral principle, not written down, but practiced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Holland was: good is what increases man's reality, bad is what diminishes his reality. So thought the Dutch merchants, and so thought Spinoza, with the difference, however, that reality was for the merchant, his *real* estate, his fortune, his private profit; whereas reality was for Spinoza man's essence, which man has to maintain unconditionally. Good was for Spinoza all that strengthens his essence, his virtue; bad all that weakens his essence, his power.

The reserve I have made before by emphasizing the *general* morals, involves the fact that not the whole of the population practiced the morals, let me better call it, the immorals of the Government of Holland, which was, in fact, the Amsterdam burgomasters. There were, thus, exceptions but too few in number as to affect the general practice. Besides, these paragons of morality were many times indirect accomplices of the merchants, for instance, through their participation in what every one in Holland called the "racket" of the East-India Company. And even if this should not be the case, then still the great question remains, whether their passivity, their not doing any-

thing against the things that happened around them, and that they condemned from the bottom of their heart,—was not in fact, activity, because of the positive cooperation, at least, in the perpetuation of the conditions.

Maybe as it is, it is here not the place to pass judgment on the Dutch morality or immorality of the seventeenth century. I have called it immorality, not because I condemn it as such, but on the ground that the perpetrators of the fishy affairs themselves saw it as immoral, otherwise they would not have committed their manipulations clandestinely, whenever possible. Their secrecy, their attempts to gloss over their shortcomings, are the best evidence for their bad conscience. The Dutch immorality is for me nothing else but the most conspicuous confirmation of what I called, before, the lust of reality (in its mildest form) and the obsession by reality (in its wildest form).

And to prove this I shall have to expatiate somewhat on this subject and present in this chapter what may seem to be a “chronique scandaleuse,” but is simply a series of facts for the substantiation of my point.

Now the facts.

Let me begin with the unsavory play with *religion*. During the seventeenth century Holland was the only country of Western Europe that had the reputation of being the country of freedom of religion. Hobbes (1588-1679) found there a publisher of his works, from which his own country, England almost shrunk. Descartes (1590-1650) moved in 1629 to Holland to escape persecution in France notwithstanding his active catholicism. He remained in Holland for twenty years. Locke (1632-1704) wrote his main work *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1687) in Holland, where he lived from 1683 till 1688. Holland was also the only country where a philosopher like Spinoza (1633-1677) could get his books printed. It is true, he encountered a lot of demurrers and demurrals. Even an attempt was made on his life. He was excommunicated from the Jewish community. The magistrates of Amsterdam banished him from the capital in 1656. In 1670, the great theologians of the University of Leyden found his *Tractatus theologico-politicus* “so wicked and so blasphemous as never a book had been written in the world.” Prince William III of Orange agreed on political reasons with

the dominés, and on July 19, 1674, the Court of Justice in the Hague prohibited the book. On June 6, 1678, the Curators of the University of Leyden placed Spinoza's *Opera posthuma*, on the index because "they contained a great many noxious and heterodox propositions and conclusions . . . in the most ignominious way; because of its impiety and heterodoxy it deserved to be burnt." A placard by the States of Holland condemned the book as "profane, atheistic, and blasphemous under the heaviest penalties and indignations."

We see the Dutch tolerance was not at all roses and moonlight. The Catholics were not much infatuated with the Dutch tolerance either. They were not allowed to have their religious services. Last but not least, the Hollanders likewise discriminated against the Jews. No Jews were admitted to municipal and provincial offices. There were restrictions in the admission of Jews to the guilds. Children of Jews were not permitted to attend the schools. And still there was no country in Europe with greater tolerance than Holland.

The question now arises, was the Dutch tolerance really as honorable and magnanimous, and bounteous, as it had the appearance? Me-thinks we better ask the great men of the seventeenth century themselves. The burgomaster of Amsterdam, Cornelis Pietersz. Hooft, in 1578, pointed to the fact that Holland was subsisting entirely on navigation and trade. The prime requisite for the population was therefore, "een familiere liefthallicheid" (an intimate mutual sweetness). Thus tolerance because of the trade. Hugo de Groot was in his *Nederlandtsche Jaerboeken en Historien* more unambiguous. He reports that William of Orange was so clever as to invite Georgius Cassander and Franciscus Balduinus of Atrecht, both men of great experience and scholars in ecclesiastical history, to lecture in Holland on the subject of religious tolerance of the Lutherans, although the latter were opposed to any form of revolution against Spain. Tolerance, however, was necessary for the sake of commerce and peace. It was not reasonable, argued William of Orange, to treat the Lutherans worse than the Jews, whom even the Pope had granted freedom of religion, provided they paid for it. The most convincing proof that tolerance was just selfishness, is to be seen in the following story. In 1668, the States General tried to persuade

the King of Sweden to grant freedom of religion to the members of the Reformed Religion. O. van Rees⁶⁹ reveals the motive of this petition: "Tolerance in this exceptional case, seemed to be most profitable to Dutch commerce." However, the Dutch Ambassador to the Swedish Court, Pieter de Groot, disagreed with the States General. He wrote to Johan de Witt, that freedom of religion in Sweden would be no asset but a liability to Dutch trade, because "I think that many families would leave our country," if they were allowed to fulfill their Reformed Church obligations in Sweden and Denmark. Thus, tolerance in Holland, and at the same time intolerance abroad, as trade may require.⁷⁰

Now a few examples of exploitation of religion to make money. When Usselinx planned a West-India Company, he tried to get the cooperation of the Calvinists. So he wrote among other things: "We may expect that not only our navigation, our crafts, and our commerce will expand and flourish to a considerable extent, but also that the soul-saving Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ will be propagated and many thousands of people will be brought to the Light of Truth and to eternal blessedness. For this purpose a council of pious, wise, and learned theologians and clergymen is to be instituted to work out a plan for sending out ministers and teachers, in order to build up the Church of Christ and to destroy the kingdom of Satan." What was behind this religious zeal? Well, the same Usselinx gave himself away on another occasion: "The Spanish monks have taught what great service they have rendered to the King of Spain in Africa, Asia, and America, by exploring the treasures of the country; and how they have fostered trade by subjugating whole peoples, what the King's arms and warriors had not been able to. With the blessing of God, our pastors would do the same in a still more perfect way."⁷¹

The West-Indian Company never carried through the planned mission work. It was just an institution for roving Spanish galleons and for slave-trade. The Calvinists founded their slave-trade theory on *Genesis* IX:25, where Canaan was called "the slave of the slaves," and on the fact that the New Testament does not forbid slave-trade. So it was unobjectionable.⁷²

The East-India Company did send missionaries. But Professor L. Knappert writes: "The Dutchmen considered the

propagation of the Reformed Creed in the East-Indies only as a practical means to obtain God's benediction in the form of mace, cloves, and cinnamon."⁷³

In the same way as the Amsterdam merchants desecrated religion to make money, they betrayed their fatherland, when ever they could, to make profit. A few examples of trade with the enemy have already been given in the chapter on Politics. O. van Rees reports further that the Hollander de Moucheron intended to sell his whole fleet to Henry IV of France, because the patent of the East-India Company did no longer allow his private trade to the Indies. And C. Busken-Huet adds, that, in 1609, the Hollander Issac le Maire too "was willing to sell his fatherland to the highest bidder."

After the burgomaster of Amsterdam, Reinier Pauw (1564-1638) had retired, his former colleagues accused him of having sold cargoes of butter and cheese to the enemy. An investigation stated that the other burgomasters had made similar criminal transactions.⁷⁴

Cornelis Bicker (1593-1654) had invested his whole fortune in the West-India Company. After the seizure of the Spanish silver Fleet in 1628, the Company paid 50% dividends; after the seizure of the Honduras fleet 30%. The shares touched the highest record on the stock exchange. Bicker sold his shares with an immense profit and thereupon he had his brother, burgomaster Andries Gerritsz Bicker (1597-1652), make legal proceedings against the patent of the West-India Company, which prohibited private trade to a number of foreign countries. Cornelis got his will and started immediately an enterprise in Brazil. He knew where and how he could make a lucky deal, and earned in one year over 100,000 guilders.⁷⁵

The same Andries Bicker, Abraham Boom (1572-1642), and Jan Cornelisz. Geelvinck (1597-1652)—he was called after his pirate vessel de Geelvinck!—owed their fortunes to trade with the enemies of their "fatherland."⁷⁶

Not only the Spaniards, but also the Dunkirk and Ostende pirates, who were a real pest for the Dutch trade, were provided by the Bickers with all they needed to cause damage to the Dutch trade. Between 1641 and 1650, the French pirates in the Mediterranean Sea caused damage to the Dutch fleets to the

amount of 7,499,000 fl.; in 1650, 2,348,000 fl.; and in 1651, 1,329,000 fl.⁷⁷

In 1638, the Amsterdam merchant Bylandt was brought to account by the Stadholder of Holland, Prince Frederic Henry, for having sold four cargoes of powder (a total of 300,000 pounds) to the Spaniards in Antwerp. The Count d'Estrades reports in his *Lettres*⁷⁸ the answer of Bylandt to the Prince: "Si pour gagner dans le commerce il fallait passer par l'enfer, il hasarderait de bruler ses voiles" (If he had to pass with his ships through hell to make profit, he would risk to scorch his sails).⁷⁹

Joh. E. Elias illustrates in his work *De Vlootbouw*⁸⁰ in an amusing way the patriotism of the Dutch merchants. In 1652, Holland was in war with England. The "fatherland" was in urgent need of ships. Nevertheless, the merchants placed at the Government's disposal only the oldest and most rotten sea-tubs, and, of course, for fantastic rents. The losses of lives were so enormous that, according to Thurloe, a mutiny broke out in Alkmaar, in 1653. The government realized that the war would be lost unless it had at its disposal a number of the biggest merchantmen of the East-India Company. The directors delivered them reluctantly and only for a short time. Finally the States General confiscated some ships that had just arrived from the East, whereupon the directors of the Company refused to have them unloaded. The Admirals could not wait any longer and sailed out against England, in the literal sense of the word, with floating warehouses, manned with the scum of all nations. Every day mutinies took place, drinking-bouts, and occasionally open rebellion in front of the enemy. When finally the battle seemed to become too furious, the crew shifted the helm and sailed home.

The Amsterdam dealers in cannon exploited the "Fatherland"-in-need in the same way as the directors of the East-India Company. They demanded such exorbitant prices and delivered such miserable junk that the States General were obliged to place the orders abroad.

"The *nepotism* of the regents strove with their corruption," assures us Ernst Baasch.⁸¹ Pieter de la Court justified this practice: "The regents of a country, like all other men, are

inclined to do well to themselves and their relatives. So they divide all advantages and offices among themselves and their friends. Every one would do the same in their place. If they do not break their oath and select only clever men, what could be wrong with it?" To the "clever" men that were selected, belonged one day, a baby girl, only a few weeks old, who, on the occasion of her baptism, was presented by her uncle, who happened to be a burgomaster of Amsterdam, with her appointment to Postmaster General of Amsterdam, for the time of her life.

The consequence of nepotism was, of course, a dangerous accumulation of offices. Only one example. Cornelis Pompe van Meerdervoort, Knight of St. Michael, owned the estates Hendriksambacht, Ijde-mans ambacht, Schildmansambacht, Kinderambacht, Meerdervoort, and Kortambacht. He was Bailiff of Dordrecht, Councillor even there, Master of the Home for Old Men, President of the Leperhouse for Prisoners and Insanes, Curator of the Latin Schools, Bailiff and Dike-Grave of the Land of Strijn, Counsellor and Steward General of South-Holland.⁸²

Bribery, the practice of giving or taking bribes, to pervert the judgment or corrupt the conduct of a person in a position of trust, was most frequent in the courts. As early as in the days of Hugo de Groot,⁸³ the Judges had to take the oath of office by which they solemnly promised to refuse gifts, "eatables and drinkables from the parties litigant, unless they intended to spend the countervalue of these gifts in works of charity." So the Honorable Gentlemen of the Court always had a couple of back-doors open. First, only the "intention" was required. Cannot a man change, or forget about his intention? Second, does not "charity" begin at home? Bribery of the bailiffs and aldermen by Catholics was considered as a matter of fact in Holland. Considerable amounts were yearly paid in Grootebroek, Gouda, Alkmaar, Schoonhoven, etc., to prevent the execution of the placards against religious meetings of the Catholics.⁸⁴ One of the most heinous forms of bribery was the following. The aldermen received beside their salary a share in the fine: 50% in civil cases, and 33% in criminal cases.⁸⁵ They were thus interested in driving up the fines as high as possible. In "dull" periods they

used "agents provocateurs" to make "cases." Especially the rich Amsterdam merchants were fleeced to have charges withdrawn. According to Kernkamp,⁸⁶ the aldermen made fifty-fifty with the bailiffs. The covetousness of the aldermen had at last become proverbial in Holland: "Schouten en baljuwen, grijpen als wuwen."⁸⁷ They made money with the assistance of prostitutes who were threatened with exile, imprisonment, or flogging, if they did not betray the names of the merchants with whom they had had sexual intercourse. The sinners were then caught redhanded and blackmailed for the rest of their lives. Further details are to be found in van den Bergh's *De Baljuwen* and in the letters of P. C. Hooft. G. D. J. Schotel⁸⁸ remarks: "Justice was totally corrupted"; and van den Bergh summarizes the situation of Holland in the seventeenth century in the following words: "Nobles, officers, and lawyers were generally summoned before the courts on account of violence, misdemeanor, and fighting; attorneys of blackmailing; notaries of forging documents; sheriffs, officers, of insolence; merchants of fraud and bankruptcy; ministers of lasciviousness and libels against the State; the aldermen on account of all these crimes and some more."

Bribery in justice found its counterpart in active and passive bribery "with gifts and pensions" in diplomacy. On the occasion of the Treaty of Christianople between Sweden and Denmark (1660), the Danes bribed a number of Dutch delegates and so got information how far the States General would go. When Servien arrived from Munster at the Hague, he had 30,000 livres in his pocket to pay Dutch State Officials for handing over documents of importance. The settlements of the accounts are still on hand. Geñaranda reported to Spain, in 1648: "every one in the Dutch Government is venal." And Wicquefort assured, about 1650: "It cannot be denied that even the highest government officials in Holland can be bribed." This is about in conformity with the view of the French Ambassador in Holland, in 1660, that "there were in the whole Republic only four men, who could not be bribed; Johan de Witt, Johan's brother Cornelis de Witt in Dordrecht, van Beuningen in Amsterdam, and Beverningk in Gouda." The Government employees had a lot more of occasions to make money in an improper way. Otto Pringsheim⁸⁹

asserts, for instance: "The Admiralties were a breeding place of corruption." In 1636, there was an investigation of the Admiralty of the Meuse. A large number of counsellors and other officials were punished for fraudulent bookkeeping, smuggling, and other deceit. In order to prevent these crimes, the Government let out on lease the half of the inland duties, but only for a short time. The Admiralty of Amsterdam objected and succeeded to pull through. In 1637, the old practice was reintroduced and from then on, the same swindle and fraud luxuriated as in the glorious days of yore. With the blessing of the regents of Amsterdam, the highest positions of the Admiralty were sold, often to morons.⁹⁰ If one of the citizens dared to point to the scandal, he was sure to be exiled from the town. The English Ambassador reported to London, that not even the sultan ruled in such a shameless way, as the Dutch regents did. The book-keeping in the towns was not much better than in the Admiralties. The following regents became bankrupts: van Lodestryn in Delft, in 1597; Ablas in den Briel, in 1611; the sons of the Revenue Officer General P. Cornelis van Nierop in the Hague, in 1612; Musch, the son-in-law of Holland's national poet, Jacob Cats; etc. On the occasion of their bankruptcies a number of embezzlements at the expense of the State came to the light.

Another scandal which lets in a sharp light upon the Amsterdam aristocracy is the following. In 1609 the States of Holland approved of a plan for the extension of Amsterdam. When, in 1611, it came to convey the plan into effect, the Council of Amsterdam discovered that, in the mean time, the burgomaster Frans Hendricks Oetgens, together with his brother-in-law Barthold Cromhout, and his friend the Alderman Jonas Cornelisz. Witsen, had secretly bought in all the building-plots, of course, for a mere song. The new owners asked a figure so extravagant that the City Council declined to pay the price. But what happened? The Burgomaster Oetgens made some of the top secret files of the City Council accessible to his son Anthony Oetgens van Waveren, who made a register with chapter and verse of all the filth, and dirt, and frauds committed by each single member of the Council. He then blackmailed them that, in case they obstinately refused to pay the price fixed by his

father, he, Oetgens Jr. would bring to light their budget of crimes. After many years of negotiations, the Council at last consented and voted for the fifteenfold of the original price.

After the term of office of Burgomaster Oetgens expired, in 1650, he was not reelected for the following reasons. He had appointed his son as a polder-master without the consent of the other burgomasters. In the polders where he himself had the function of a dike-grave, he had not kept the ways in repair. Because of this, the farmers were obliged to make a detour which crossed his estate, where they had to pay a high toll. The mortgage on one of his estates had been redeemed. Oetgens had "forgotten" to give notice to the Registry of Real Property. He sold building-sites to the town, and "forgot" to mention the duties on the ground, etc.

In 1654, there was again an election for burgomasters in Amsterdam. The Secretary opened the meeting with an invocation. He prayed to God "in the name and for the sake of the bitter passion of Thy son, Jesus Christ, mayest Thou illuminate our hearts, and direct our affections by Thy Holy Ghost, so that we put aside all our private interests to the best of our ability, since Thy Holy Ghost and Thy wisdom do not dwell in a wicked heart, nor in a body that is bound to sin. May we elect pious and veracious and wise men free from covetousness." The pious, veracious and wise men of the Council whispered "Amen!" and elected the blackmailer and crook Anthony Oetgens van Waveren to their burgomaster.⁹¹

During the whole of the seventeenth century, Holland had the sad reputation of being the center of *counterfeiting money*. J. G. Elias⁹² tells us that the hedge-mints of Roermond, Emmerich, Huyssen, Gorcum, and those of Zealand worked with full capacity to carry out the standing orders from the Amsterdam regents. Their best customers were Bartholomew Minster in Amsterdam, the brother-in-law of the Alderman and Counsellor Jacob Jacobsz Hinlopen; and Salomon Voerknecht, brother-in-law of Burgomaster Volckert Overlander and nephew of the burgomaster Cornelis Pietersz Hooft. Another source of revenues was the "biquettage" of coins: bad coins were demonetized and after a while brought again into circulation to standard value.

The history of the *East-India Company* reads like a criminal.

Nothing gives us a better idea of the commercial morals of the regents than these records.⁹³

The Company, founded in 1602, had six Chambers or Sections: at Amsterdam, in Zeeland, at Rotterdam, Delft, Horn, and Enkhuizen. The Amsterdam Chamber had a dominant position with more than the half of the shares, and twenty directors, or "bewindhebbers." Zeeland had twelve, all the other Chambers together only seven directors. Vacancies of directorships were supplied by the burgomaster of the town in question. The whole Company was thus in the hollow of the hands of the Amsterdam burgomasters.

The commercial principle of the Company was to reduce the expenses to the utmost, to buy in the colonies as cheap as possible—what amounted to a merciless exploitation of the defenceless natives—and to drive up the prices on the retail market to the extreme. The ethical principle of the Company was: All that brings in money, is allowed.

The expenses were reduced by giving the crews a pay so low that the Governor General of the Indies, Jan Pietersz. Coen, the sanctimonious psalmer with the heart of stone, complained loudly and bitterly. The pay, he said, is just as miserable as the food is. Pieter Valckenier stated that pay and food were a third less than on ships of other nations. The result was that only the lowest class rabble signed on. In *Nootwendich Discours* (1622) it was frankly stated that the whole world held the Indies for a house of correction. The victims were dosed with liquor by crimps, and then urged to sign a contract with the obligation to pay these soul-traders fl. 150, if they got a job as soldiers; fl. 200 as sailors; fl. 300 as craftsmen or officers; and besides they demanded a gratification equivalent to two month's pay. After an unctuous valedictory sermon, they sailed out from the roads of Texel, singing psalms.⁹⁴ Most of them never returned. The death-rate on board was terrible. In 1652, the "Walvis" had on its passage 45, and the "Olifant" 48 deaths. The crew consisted of the poorest of the poorest from the poorest countries: Jutland, Ditmarschen, Westphalia, and Norway. The Governor General Coen judged them; "What can we expect from the refuse of the earth? As soldiers and sailors they are just good enough to be used against the enemy. It seems that God has

created them as cannon-fodder. For the rest they are of no use."

The interest of the trade demanded that this rabble was provided with women. For many years the Amsterdam Directors had resolved to expatriate "the female refuse of the country," reports Coen in a letter of the year 1620.⁹⁵ We can imagine what the result was. In 1620, the pious Governor General suggested to expatriate "*four, five hundred, or more girls, in the age of ten to twelve years from the Dutch orphanages.*"

As a counterpart of this, I should like to insert here another fact that happened some time later, and which is likewise instructive of the attitude of the regents, whom Joost van den Vondel called the "fathers of the fatherland," toward the children of Holland. In 1682, the magistrates of Amsterdam fitted out one of the warehouses on the Singel for the purpose of winding silk. The industrialists had complained about the expenses for the winding which as yet was to be done outside the town. They thought that this job could be done cheaper by girls in the age of seven to twelve years, whose parents lived on charity. Brugmans⁹⁶ describes the building as a kind of prison. The floors were partitioned by iron palings into quods, in each of which sixteen to seventeen girls worked under the surveillance of an "elderly woman." There was place for altogether 500 children. They earned seven stivers (thirteen American cents) a week. They worked thirteen hours a day in summer, eleven hours in winter. As a further compensation, they got free Bible and free beer. Free Bible did not mean reading lessons, the history of the Bible was only told by the "elderly woman." The regents were very proud of this "pious institution."

Now back to the East-India Company. The officials of the Company were paid just as bad as the sailors and the soldiers, to the effect that they were dependent on "godsendings." So they sold things belonging to the Company and sacked the money. They stole whatever they could lay their hands upon, by preference, commodities which could be swapped with the Chinese.⁹⁷ They used iron and lumber of the Government for their private dwellings. The book of dominé Francois Valentijn abounds of such mischiefs. The super-merchants made fifty-fifty with the governors in the appropriation of profits from overweights. It worked in this way. Cloves were bought in a perfectly dry

condition. In the storehouses, the cloves were soaked, and then weighed and delivered to the Company, who thus paid the water they had added. Valentijn assures us that a super-merchant could easily make a surplus of 10,000 guilders in one season, after having paid the 50% kick-back to the Governor of the district. The officials cheated the natives wherever and whenever they could. A governor had bought for 13,000 rixdollars a lot of amber from a Chinese. As the Chinese showed him the I.O.U. the Hollander grasped the document from his hands and tore it up saying: "So, now you cannot prove that I owe you a farthing." After long negotiations the Chinese had finally to content himself with 3000 rixdollars. We can now understand that offices, for instance, in the district of Orangkaja were sold to the highest bidders.

On December 14, 1656, and again on April 1, 1658, passive bribery was strictly forbidden by the Board of Amsterdam. When Valentijn, on the occasion of New Year, was admitted to an audience with the Governor General, there was no place in the palace to sit down for a moment; all rooms and all halls were crammed with "presents" from Chinese merchants. Small wonder that Governor Cos, who died on February 22, 1666, left an estate of 600,000 rixdollars, scraped together within the few years he had been in office in Ternate.

The most disgraceful thing was the religious varnish sanctimoniously smeared over the administration to cover up its rottenness. The meetings of the Higher Board at Batavia opened with the following prayer: "O merciful and good God and heavenly Father, whereas Thy divine Majesty had designed to call us to the management of the patented East-India Company of the Netherlands, and whereas our Council is assembled here for this purpose in Thy holy Name, in order to take such decisions as will be most profitable for the Company mentioned before, and to maintain justice, and to propagate the Reformed Christian doctrine among these wild and brutal peoples, in praise and hope of Thy holy Name and to the welfare of our Directors,—this all we should not be able to achieve without Thy graceful assistance—we pray Thee, therefore, most merciful Father, that Thou mayest help us with Thy paternal wisdom and preside in our midst, and illuminate our hearts, to keep us clear from

bad inclinations, errors, and other faults, in order that our hearts may be pure from all human arrangements, and may be directed so that we intend and decide in our meeting nothing but what will be to the glorification and the praise of Thy most holy Name, and to be the greatest profit of our lords and masters [in Holland], without considering, our profit, that is to say, not more than will be necessary to carry through the orders given to us, and not more than will be necessary to our salvation."⁹⁸

The cruelty of the Hollanders against the natives came up to the cruelty of the God of the Old Testament in his exterminatory wars against the peoples of Canaan. It would lead us too far afield, were we to enter into details, but I cannot omit to present a few samples of "heroism" of Holland's national hero Jan Pietersz. Coen, the Governor General of the East-Indies. I must advance that Coen was a share holder of the Company,⁹⁹ as his letter of March 4, 1621, proves. Once upon a day he advised the Board of Directors to kidnap the inhabitants of the coast of China. The men should be enabled to redeem themselves on ransom; the women should remain in India "om onsen handel te peupleen end volck the houden" (to populate the Indies and to work as maid-servants in the houses of the Hollanders).

In 1621, Coen "conquered" the Banda-Islands. Since he was afraid that the natives would never be domesticated, he resolved to depopulate the islands, just as he had depopulated the island of Jokatra, in 1619. A part of the population of Banda was destined to be starved to death. Another part was shipped to Java and sold as slaves for the rice-fields. After Coen had reached his aim, the island was "repopulated" by whites and slaves, who were pressed to deliver fixed quantities of spices to the Government. They would be remunerated by rice and clothing. The deliveries of rice, however, failed so that Banda was ravaged by famine. Especially the mortality of the slaves was horrifying. But the Government did not worry the least. Slave-drivers brought new supplies. For all that, business prospered. Within five years Banda was, according to Coen, "the most exquisite pearl in the crown of the Company." The output was 3 million pounds of nutmegs and 200,000 pounds of mace. The cost-price was fl. 0.075, the market price fl. 3.25. Coen reported to the

Board of Directors: "Your dear land of Banda is doing well, praised be the Ruler of the Universe." And Coen got an extra-gratification of 3000 Carolus guilders "for the conquest of Banda."¹⁰⁰

Often whole plantations were destroyed, for instance, at Howanobel, and, in 1625, on Amboina for the second time in order to keep the prices up. The natives starved to death, because it took too many years before the new trees began to bear fruit.

The administration of the East-India Company in Holland was just a farce. The directors never missed an opportunity to convince the people of the fact that the Company was an institution "to the honor of God," and to "the honor of the fatherland." It is difficult to say, which of the two lies is more impudent.

In 1604, Pieter Lyuntgens in Amsterdam sold all his shares, because "the money was bloodstained." The real reason was that he intended to trade to the Indies under French flag. Henry IV of France immediately gave his consent. But the Directors boycotted the plan by prohibiting the skippers and sailors to enroll. Besides, the Directors threatened to stop their payments for the patent, if the States General should support the King of France. Three French ministers were bribed each with a luxurious gilded bedstead, and herewith the whole matter was hushed up. Balthasar de Moucheron and Isaac le Maire had similar plans. If Henry IV had not died, in 1610, le Maire might have succeeded.

A great number of competing companies were founded in foreign countries by Dutch "patriots," for instance an Abyssinian Company in East-Friesland, in 1632; a Swedish Company by Usselinx, in 1632; a Brandenburg-African Company by Aernoudt Gysels van Lier and Raule of Vlissingen, etc.¹⁰¹

The greatest proof of patriotism was brought by the Directors of the Company in Amsterdam, in 1644, when they declared in the name of the East-India Company that the conquered countries in the Indies were no Netherlandish provinces, but private property of some merchants, "who were allowed to sell them to whom they liked, even to the King of France or to other enemies of the United Provinces." The Indies were the main source of the fabulous riches of Holland. The average dividend from 1610 to 1648 was 20% per annum. In some years, however, the

Company paid 40%, 50%, one time even 75%. The dividends, however, did never depend on the balance. There were years with big losses and high dividends, and years with large profits and no dividends. The ups-and-downs were always the result of machinations of the speculating Directors.

In *Eyndelicke Justificatie der Misnoechde Participanten* (1624), a lot of facts were reported, among others, how the Directors spread misleading news about the Company in order to influence the quotations. Innumerable libels were published against the fraudulent management. In a lampoon of 1622, the public was informed that vacancies in the Company were not filled up, in order to divide the salaries among themselves. The equipment of the ships was made as expensive as possible because the Directors got a commission from the contractors. The Directors bought spices from the Company without weighing, counting, or checking. The sale of spices was postponed, till the Directors had got rid of their private stores. They traded for private account, using the ships of the Company. They never made their appearance in the Hague without precious presents for the members of the Government. Every time when the share-holders intended to lodge a charge against the mismanagement of the Board, the judges were ordered to dismiss the case. The obligatory statement of accounts was never made during the whole of the seventeenth century. In 1622, the participants required inspection of the office books, but they were thrown out as insolent intruders. They were told that if they should have the face to come back, there would be no distribution of dividends at the end of the year. The participants, thereupon, appealed to the States General, of course, in vain.

These facts could be centuplied easily. I think, however, that they will be sufficient and to spare, to give an idea of the profitomania of the ruling class in Holland and of all those who hoped to belong some time to this class.

It is understandable that the orthodox Calvinist ministers many times availed themselves of the opportunity to blacken the regents by scolding at and damning their corruption. Their indignation, however, was for the greater part a political maneuver: they wanted their parishioners to revolt and to recreate Amsterdam into another Geneva.

Is not it significant that the ministers who profited by the peculiar commercial management, or hoped for later profits, did not declaim against the Company? The Reformed missionaries in the Indies kept silent, as did so many ministers in Holland, among them, dominé Plancius who owned East-India shares to an amount of 100,000 guilders, and dominé Maximilian Teelinck of Middelburg who was one of the biggest share-holders of the slave-driving West-India Company.

At the end of this chapter, the question may be raised: Was not it in the seventeenth century in all European countries exactly the same? This question must be denied emphatically, for the simple reason that in Holland alone there was no power which could resist the arbitrariness of the merchants. All European countries had absolutist governments, who cared, in the first place, for the welfare of the whole of the country, *because this was most profitable for the welfare of the absolutist monarch*. The interests of one single class came only in the second place. In no European country would it have been possible that one town systematically destroyed smaller neighboring towns; that the towns systematically exploited the villages in the vicinity; that the merchants enriched themselves by profit from trade with the enemy; that the merchants supported the pirates who brought indescribable losses to their fellow citizens. In no other country, the rich merchants, and the rich merchants alone, had legislative power, which they exerted exclusively to their advantage. In Holland there was no executive power. In no country did the merchant enjoy such unlimited freedom. On the contrary, in all European countries the merchants complained bitterly that they were kept within bounds by the "despotic" laws of mercantilism. That was the reason why everywhere the merchants were the most embittered opponents of absolutism and mercantilism, which was, in fact, nothing but economic absolutism. Everywhere it was the bourgeoisie who put finally an end to absolutism. All these revolutions were burgher revolutions, with the objective of democracy, or at least, a constitutional monarchy, where the merchant would have his say in government.

SCIENCE

The love of reality of the Hollanders which dominated the whole of life during the seventeenth century, manifested itself

also in the science of this period. The sciences in which the Hollanders excelled, did not concern *abstract* things and theories, but concrete, practical, and actual problems, for instance, navigation, ship-building, art of fortification, townplanning and housing problems.

In the early seventeenth century the navigators had still to recur, for taking the longitude of a position, to the primitive method of the Hollander Simon Stevin (1548-1620) which he described in his book *Havenvinding*, a section of his work *Eert-clootschrift*. The importance of this book may be gathered from the fact that the Venetian Ambassador requested Hugo de Groot to translate *Havenvinding* into Latin. The Latin edition was published under the title *Limen heuretica sive portuum investigandorum ratio* (Leyden, 1599).

Galilei (1564-1642) discovered a better method, consisting of the observation of the satellites of Jupiter which, however, was likewise far from precise. Till at last Christiaan Huygens (1629-1695) found a definitive solution which is still in use. In 1656 he built the first *chronometer*, of course, a rather primitive one, by the application of Galilei's pendulum to a clockwork. The movements of the work were regulated by a pendulum with escapement wheel, which kept its balance through a spiraling spring.

In 1653, Huygens published an abridged edition; in 1673, a complete description of his work. The title of the latter runs: *Horologium Oscillatorium sive de motu pendularum ad horologia, adaptato, demonstrationes geometricae* (Paris, 1673). Meantime Huygens had trusted the clockmaker Salomon Coster in the Hague with the fabrication of his clocks. In 1660, not less than four clockmakers in Paris had bought Huygens' patent. From 1662 on, his invention began to spread in England.

Another invention equally essential to the navigation was that of the *telescope*. The first was constructed by Hans and Zacharias Jansen and Lipperhey who lived in Middelburg. Huygens was the first to fabricate *oculars* (eye pieces) for the telescope. He was also the one who invented the *lathe* for grinding and polishing lenses. Spinoza who was obliged to earn his living as a lens-grinder, continued grinding by hand.

Thanks to all these inventions and improvements of old

inventions, astronomy advanced considerably, although many discoveries, for instance, the satellites and the ring of Saturnus had no bearing on navigation.

Of great importance was the work of the practical astronomist and geodesist Willebrordus Snellius (or Snel van Royen), who succeeded for the first time to measure a part of a meridian through trigonometry. The theory was published in his book *Eratosthenes Batavus*.

Further contributions to navigation were the parallelogram of forces, the barometer control, and the improvement of the thermometer by Huygens; and finally the book of Nicolaas Witsen on naval architecture: *Architectura navalis of Aeloude en hedendaegse Scheepsbouw en bestier*. So far for navigation.

Commerce most profited by the progresses of mathematics. Simon Stevin was here the man. He was born in Bruges, in 1548. He began his career as a merchant in Antwerp. His first publication was *Tafelen van Interest, Mitsgaders de Constructie der selver, ghecalculeert door Simon Stevin Bruggelinck* (Antwerp, 1582). In 1581, he moved to Leyden, where he was matriculated at the University, in 1583. Two years later, he published *De Thiende*, on decimal fractions. The book was dedicated to the astronomers, geodesists, mint-masters, etc. "ende alle Cooplieden" (to all merchants).

One of his most remarkable works is *Wisconstighe Ghedachtenissen*, in four volumes. The five sectors were: cosmography, practical geometry, art of weighing, theory of perspective, and miscellaneous, in which he deals, among other subjects, with book-keeping by double entry, for the administration of domains, and of State finances.

Huygens also occupied himself with the theory of probabilities, and to Johan de Witt the Hollanders are indebted for principles of a theory of life insurance.

Stevin was not only a prominent mathematician, but at the same time a great engineer, and contributed as such, although only indirectly, to the growth and the prosperity of his country and its commerce. In 1586, he invented and obtained the exclusive right to build a new kind of watermill.

The States General appointed Stevin to Chief-Surveyor of the maintenance of dikes and roads, and the canal navigation,

in 1592; and in 1607, he was promoted to Chief-Engineer of Defense Works and Quartermaster General of the Army of the Republic. He wrote, in 1617, a work on *Sterckte bouw door spilsluizen*, systematic use of water for the defense of the country, a work which was highly praised.

Remarkable were Stevin's ideas on the subject of town planning (*Van Oirdening der Steden*), and house design (*Van de Huysoirdening*). He starts with a resolute rejection of the Classic and the so-called Renaissance architecture. The decisive factors for town planning are considered to be the nature of the building-plot, the climate, and the material conditions of the people who had to live there (thus, their occupation, their conveniences, their health, etc.). One of his principles was, that the city should have its business section, its church, and its schools, in the center. The residential section should consist of concentrical grachts, which would be cut by radial streets, running from the center to the town gates. In this way all the inhabitants were equally distanced from the center and the environs of the town. I wonder, whether the layout of Amsterdam, as it was at the beginning of the seventeenth century, stood before Stevin's mind, when he wrote down these ideals. Batavia on Java is supposed to be the materialization of Stevin's planning. He gives further particulars for a system of sewers, for covering the side walks on the streets, and so on.

Houses should be built in compact blocks around yards. The unsafety in Holland during the war with Spain, and the great number of vagabonds might have suggested this style of building. Stevin required an abundance of light in every room of the house. Therefore, he was opposed to the use of colored glass. But the windows should be constructed in such a way as to prevent neighbors and passers-by to look in. He gives definite prescriptions how to partition the floors, how to build cellars, water-works, roofs, and even "reukelose heymelicken" (smellproof toilets).

Stevin, thus, was an apostle of Functionalism, of houses that were just living-machines, and that three hundred years before Europe and America were that far. The essence of Functionalism is that the form of a thing grows automatically out of its function, and out of the material used for its construction,

with the unconditional rejection of all kind of aesthetics, proportionalism, decorativism, etc. Stevin hated beauty, as sincerely as he loved logic, but then he was not an architect but a mathematician and engineer. At first glance, it may look, as if Stevin's repugnance to architectural make-up was the fruit of the Calvinist hostility to the arts. However, Stevin was not a Calvinist, but a Catholic and he remained a practicing Catholic until his death. His austerity, his asceticism become understandable, once we know, that he hated with the same cordial sincerity, titles, honors, orders, medallions, and other knickknacks. He was during the whole of his life "Mijnheer Stevin," and, in 1620, he died as "Mijnheer Stevin." But he belonged to the very few real aristocrats of the Dutch seventeenth century, to which belonged Spinoza, although he lived on twenty five Dutch cents (ten American cents) a day, and Rembrandt, during the last years of his life, could hardly spend that much.

I could complete this picture of practical science by pointing to the great microscopist of the seventeenth century, Anthonie van Leeuwenhoek (1627-1723); to the achievements in the domain of surgery by Nicolaes Tulp (1593-1674) and his colleague Deyman; to the great number of pharmaceutical books, and so on. But for my special purpose of proving that the sense of reality controlled science as well as all other realms of Dutch life, this short survey will suffice.

SPINOZA'S PHILOSOPHY

ALTERATION IN 1656

The manuals of the history of philosophy of the seventeenth century in Holland mention only two philosophers of more than local importance. The oldest is the occasionalist Arnold Geulincx (1625-1669), Professor at the Universities of Louvain and Leyden. He was a follower of Descartes with little original thinking. The only Dutch philosopher with a world reputation was Baruch (Benedict) Spinoza (1632-1677).

It is without the scope of this book to present a full-length description of Spinoza's life and his doctrines. Factualists and Specialists have already accomplished this job for ever so long. The plan of this book is only the disclosure of the relations between Rembrandt and Spinoza, the two greatest representatives of seventeenth century Holland. As yet only two times a synthesis in this direction has been essayed. The art historian André-Charles Coppier¹⁰² tried to prove that the David of Rembrandt's picture *David and Saul* (1657) of the Mauritshuis at the Hague, is a portrait of Spinoza, and the Saul a portrait of Rabbi Saul Levi Morteira, painted not from life but from memory. Coppier was, thus, concerned solely with outward relations. The philosopher Carl Gebhardt¹⁰³ researched the inner relations, but he did not succeed and could not succeed, because he started from the erroneous assumption of Rembrandt being a "baroque" artist, and Spinoza a "baroque" philosopher.

Of the great number of inner relations between Rembrandt and Spinoza, and the interconnection between them and seventeenth century life in Holland, the following are outstanding:

The relation between Spinoza's practical philosophy and the practical objectives of the contemporaneous scientific researches in Holland.

The relation between Spinoza's materialism (the doctrine that matter is the one, eternal, and infinite substance of all that exists), and Rembrandt's realism (his painting of one or another of the innumerable individual modifications of the one substance); and the relation between Spinoza's materialism and Rembrandt's realism on one side, and the vulgar materialism of the Dutch ruling class on the other side.

The relation between Spinoza's synthetic, thus, restored unity, and Rembrandt's pre-analytic lived unity, of man's body and soul, of man-in-his-world, of past-present-future of time, etc.

The relation between Spinoza's concentration on the actions and passions of man in general; and Rembrandt's concentration on the concrete actions and passions of man in his portraits.

The relation between Spinoza's dynamic conception of the affects, in contradistinction to the static conception of the affects in absolutist countries (Descartes); and Rembrandt's depiction of human life in a continuity of change, that is to say, the representation of the present moment in its fullness, thus, with its dimensions of past and future.

The relation between Spinoza's intelligence; and Rembrandt's intuition to the individual things of this world.

The relation between Spinoza's atheism, and Rembrandt's irreligiosity.

The relation between the architectural functionalism of Simon Stevin, the literary functionalism of Spinoza, and the functionalism of Rembrandt's colors, light, and composition.

The relation between the mathematical method of Simon Stevin's book-keeping, Spinoza's *mos geometricus*, and Rembrandt's utter objectivity and simplicity.

The relation between Spinoza's political anti-absolutism (his opposition to the house of Orange, to the oligarchic form of government in Holland, and his fight for a democratization of the Dutch aristocracy); and Rembrandt's primitive democracy (disregard of the classes, and exclusive association with the masses).

The relation between Spinoza's and Rembrandt's lust of freedom and the Eighty Years fight of freedom by the Hollanders.

Rembrandt's and Spinoza's innate love of Holland. Neither of the two was ever abroad although they had plenty of opportunities.

But before dealing with Spinoza's philosophy, I have to point to the fact, that there never has been a philosopher who has been misunderstood so frequently, as Spinoza. Stanislaus von Dunin-Borkowski¹⁰⁴ informs us to be familiar with fifty different interpretations of Spinozism, and among these fifty brands, he counts, for the sake of forbearance, many interpretations for one, although they are widely divergent in essential points.

Spinoza may impute this confusion to himself, although he many times forewarned his readers:¹⁰⁵ "We may reap no small advantage from the multitude, by taking as much as possible into account their mental capacity. In addition to this, we shall incline them to a benevolent reception of the truth." Spinoza, thus, made it a practice of sticking to the old terminology, and at the same time giving the old worn-out words a new sense.

It is remarkable that Pieter de la Court (van den Hove) (1618-1685), who belonged to Spinoza's circle, gives the same advice:¹⁰⁶ "A man who intends to change any government, or order, must stick to the outward appearance of the old one." He explains this thesis as follows: "Whereas the brains of men, as a rule, do not understand anything but through external objects; and whereas very few men use their intellect in things that do not belong to their profession; they judge of other things going only by the outward appearance, or by what the name means. They are more upset by the name than by the thing itself. In order to prevent taking offense, it is advisable, in ruling and changing orders, old institutions, laws, customs, *to stick to the old names as much as ever possible. In matters of church, or change of religion, this rule is still of greater importance.*" Italics mine. This is exactly what Spinoza said, only did de la Court express himself more overtly. The question whether Spinoza has inspired de la Court, or *vice versa* de la Court Spinoza; or whether a third man has put that idea into their heads, and who this source was, is of no relevance. Relevant is only the fact that Spinoza, according to his own statement, has put into practice the method of serving new wine in the old

bottles. There can be no question about. Apart from this, his prudence, his circumspection, were wholly in the line of a man whose signet-ring bore the inscription: C A U T E (Be cautious!)

For the understanding of the contents and the form of Spinoza's philosophy, we should always bear in mind that he came from a family of merchants. His grandfather Abraham d'Espinosa immigrated from Portugal to Amsterdam, between 1590 and 1600; Baruch's father Michael d'Espinosa was still born at Figueira in Portugal. The family lived in Amsterdam on the Lange Houtgracht, next door to the Portuguese Synagogue. On the Breestraat (where Rembrandt had bought a house) lived the rich Jews, the Sephardim; the poor ones, the Askenazim, had their quarters on Vlooienburg, Fleaburg.

A fact of still greater importance is that Spinoza was at first a merchant himself. His signature has been found on several transactions. Was there any one in Holland, in the seventeenth century, who was not a merchant? Rembrandt speculated in his own works. When his etchings were auctioned, he bade senselessly high prices, even for etchings, the plates of which were still in his possession. He lost at last his money by speculations "on trade and the sea." And Holland's laureate poet, Joost van den Vondel composed lacrymose tragedies on biblical themes, at the same time he ran a hosiery shop in the Warmoesstraat, and speculated lustily in sugar.

We do not know much about Spinoza's youth, but he certainly must have enjoyed an excellent education. Till 1651, he was one of the most beloved students of the great Jewish scholar in Amsterdam, Rabbi Manasseh ben Israel, teacher at the Yeshiva. To give an idea of Spinoza's knowledge: he was versed in Jewish and Christian theology, in politics, in mathematics, in natural sciences and medicine. Besides he mastered eleven languages: Portuguese, Spanish, Hollandish, Hebrew, Chaldean, Syrian, Latin, Greek, Italian, French, and German.

About 1653, Spinoza began to call the Jewish doctrine in question, and he did not make a secret of his doubts, otherwise Rabbi Saul Levi Morteira, after repeated warnings, would not have threatened him with excommunication. Spinoza himself was not deeply moved. He thanked the old Rabbi and suggested that, "by way of reciprocation, he would be gladly prepared to teach

the Rabbi how to perform the excommunication in a proper way."¹⁰⁷

On July 25, 1656, Spinoza was played out of the Synagogue with all trumpets and kettle-drums. The anathema is of such thundering beauty that I cannot abstain from letting my readers enjoy the text: "In accordance with the judgment of the Angels and in accordance with the consent of God, blessed be He, and with the consent of all the holy Congregation, in front of the holy Scrolls with the six-hundred-and-thirteen precepts which are written therein, we excommunicate, expel, curse, and damn Baruch de Espinoza with the excommunication with which Joshua banned Jericho, with the curse with which Elisha cursed the boys, and with all the curses which are written in the Law. Cursed be he by day and cursed be he by night; cursed be he when he lieth down, and cursed be he when he riseth up; cursed be he when he goeth out, and cursed be he when he cometh in. May the Lord never pardon him; may the anger and wrath of the Lord rage against this man, and bring upon him all the curses which are written in the Book of the Law; and the Lord will destroy his name from under the Heavens; and the Lord will separate him to his hurt from all the tribes of Israel with all the curses of the firmament which are written in the Book of the Law. But you who cleave unto the Lord your God, you are all alive this day. We command that none should communicate with him orally or in writing, or show him any favor, or stay with him under the same roof, or within four ells of him, or read anything composed or written by him."

When exactly Spinoza gave up his career as a merchant, we do not know. It must have been shortly before the death of his father (1654). More important is to learn, *why* he changed his profession. About this we are completely informed. His book *De intellectus emendatione* begins as follows: "After experience had taught me that all things which are generally considered to be the contents of life, are utterly futile; and when I saw that all things I feared and which feared me, were neither good nor evil in themselves, save in so far as the mind was affected by them—I determined at last to inquire whether there might be anything which might be a true and communicable good, capable to occupy the soul entirely to the exclusion of all other things; in other

words, whether something exists, the acquisition and possession of which might afford an enjoyment of a durable and highest happiness for all times to come.

"I say: 'I determined at last,' for at the moment it did not seem advisable to give up the certain for the uncertain. I saw the advantages which honor and riches yielded, and I realized that I might be debarred from acquiring these things, if I should seriously attempt to obtain something else and something new. And if, perchance, the latter should bring highest happiness, I had to realize that I should miss it. If on the other hand happiness should not be found there, and I should trouble myself for all that, then also I should be wanting in it.

"I then revolved in my mind the possibility of coming to this new way of life, or at least to certainty of its existence without changing the order and the common plan of my life. I have made many efforts in this direction, but in vain. Because, what constitutes for the larger part the contents of life, and what men, as may be gathered from their works, consider to be the greatest good, amounts to these three things: *riches, honors, and sensual delight*. These three things occupy the mind so completely, that it can scarcely think of any other good.

"As far as sensual delight is concerned, it engrosses the mind to such an extent that we are really convinced of having found a good to the effect of being kept from thinking of anything else. But sensual delight is always followed by sadness, which even in case it does not lame us entirely, anyway disturbs and dullens the soul.

"Not less is the soul occupied by the pursuit of honors and riches, especially when they are sought for their own sake inasmuch as they are evaluated as the greatest good. Honor takes up our soul still more, for it is always considered to be a good in itself and an ultimate aim. Moreover, riches and honors are not followed by sadness, as lust is; on the contrary, the more honors one has obtained, the greater one's enjoyment is, and the more one is encouraged to increase them. But, on the other hand, if at any time we should be baffled in our expectations, then, of course, there arises the greatest sadness. Finally honor is a big obstacle for another reason, we cannot obtain it without shaping our life in such a way as to please the fancy of others,

eschewing what they eschew, and pursuing what they use to pursue.

“So, after I perceived that all this was so much opposed and so contrary to my decision of choosing a new way of life, that I had to forsake either the one or the other, I had to put myself the question, on what side is to be found my greatest profit; for, as I said, it looked as if I were to give up a certain good for what was uncertain. However, after I had occupied myself with this question for some time, I found out that, if I should give up the old and prepare myself for a new way of life,—that the uncertainty of the latter did not regard its nature, but only its attainableness. On closer investigation I discovered that—provided my decision should be really serious—I was to give up a certain evil for a certain good. For I saw myself in the midst of a very great peril and obliged to recur with all my energy even to an uncertain remedy, as a critically sick man would risk his life, if no medicine should be administered. Under these circumstances the man must recur by all means to a remedy, however uncertain it may be, because it is his last chance.

“But all these remedies which vulgar follow not only avail nothing for our preservation, but even prevent it. And many times, they are the cause of the death of those who possess them, and are always the cause of the death of those who are possessed by them. Are there not many examples of people who have been persecuted nearly to death because of their wealth; and also because they have exposed themselves to so many perils in their search for treasures, that they have paid their madness with their life? And not less numerous are the examples of those who have suffered the greatest dismay for the acquisition and the conservation of honor. Finally there are innumerable cases of persons who hastened death upon themselves by excessive lusts.

“All these evils seem to have arisen from the fact that the whole of happiness or unhappiness is dependent on the nature of the object of our love. No one will ever start a fight for a thing that no one loves; there will be no sadness, if it perishes; no envy if some one else possesses it; no fear, no hatred, to put it all briefly, no passion. But all this will come about, when we love perishable things, such as those things of which we have just spoken. In contradistinction to these, love toward a thing

eternal and infinite rejoices our soul, and our joy will remain free from sadness. So it is highly desirable and worth striving after with all our might.

"I have said not without purpose: 'If only I could resolve seriously.' For, although I internally realized this, I still could not yet get rid of all avarice, lust, and greed, and honors. One thing was clear to me: as long as I keep thinking of these things, my soul would turn away from them, and think more and more seriously of the new things. I felt much comfort doing so. Because I saw that those evils were not irremediable. And although these reflections were at the commencement scarce and lasted only for a very short time, they became—after I got a better insight into the true good—more frequent and durable, especially after I had realized that love of money, of honor, and of lust were detrimental only as long as they were pursued for their own sake, and not as means to obtain other things. But if they are pursued as means to an end, they will be moderate and not detrimental at all. On the contrary, they will be conducive to the end for the sake of which they are sought. We shall prove this in its proper place.

"For the moment, I will only outline, what is meant by a true good, at the same time, what is the supreme good. To prevent misunderstanding, it must be pointed out that good and bad are to be taken in a relative sense. One and the same thing may be called good and bad under various aspects. The same may be applied to perfect and imperfect.

"Nothing can be called perfect or imperfect in respect to its own nature. We know that all happenings happen with necessity and order and according to definite laws of nature. Because human frailty cannot comprehend their necessity and, in the mean time, man forms an idea of a human nature, which is steadier than his actual nature, and man does not see any obstacle that would prevent him from acquiring such a human nature,—he is incited to look for means which should lead him to such perfection. And all that could serve as a means to reach this goal, is a true good. The highest good is for him to attain a state, in which we shall enjoy such a human nature together with other individuals, if ever possible. How this nature is, will be explained later, namely, *the consciousness of the unity of our mind with the whole of all that exists.*"

What strikes us in Spinoza's "Confession," is the almost commercial reason for his alteration. When a merchant sees a chance to make more profit with other commodities, than the ones he has placed in the market as yet, he will not hesitate for a single moment to get rid of the rest of his stock, eventually at a loss and lay in more profitable goods. Spinoza did exactly the same.

Commercial was likewise Spinoza's method to strike a balance of his life, to compare the assets with liabilities, to calculate carefully all possibilities and probabilities, and then only take a definite decision.

Commercial was also that for him only material factors came into consideration. The only thing that counted was earthly happiness. Heaven? He did not give it a second thought.

But the most conspicuous point of conformity of Spinoza to the Amsterdam merchants was his hard and cold egoism. Good is what is profitable to man. Bad is what obstructs his private profit. Spinoza thought of nothing else than of maintaining his nature. Nothing not even "reason can require from us to do something against our nature," he explains in his *Ethica*.¹⁰⁸ "The more we maintain ourselves, the more virtuous (in the sense of powerful) we shall be. And *vice versa*, the more we omit to take care for our profit, that is to say, to hold our own, the more virtueless (impotent) we shall be."¹⁰⁹

Franz Erhardt¹¹⁰ draws the last conclusion from these principles: "The moral demands from us that we must try to reach our profit unconditionally, even in case it should be at the expense of our fellow-men. We are even morally obliged to perpetrate crimes, in order to reach our objectives, if only we are sure to have nothing to fear for ourselves." Spinoza did not go that far, but the Dutch merchant did, not only in the colonies, but in Holland. Spinoza preached even altruism, but an altruism which was, in fact, hyperegoism. In order to know through adequate ideas (the Dutch merchant contented himself with inadequate ideas), what is virtuous, we must follow the lead of our mind in its statement of what is good, that is to say, what is profitable for us personally. And our mind will tell us that the highest good is to be found in the conscious union of our self with the totalness of all that exists, in other words, with Nature. And our mind

will further tell us, says Spinoza, that we can even heighten our highest happiness, if we share it with as many as possible fellow-men. But, if we do our utmost to come to this supreme happiness, we do not desire the happiness of the rest of mankind *exclusively for the sake of themselves, but for the sake of ourselves*. Our altruism, thus, is essentially hyperegoism.

Someone may interfere here and ask: Was the so-called charity of the Dutch merchant, who gave his money for the foundation and the maintenance of orphanages, homes for old people, "hofjes" (courts), hospitals, houses of correction, etc., and his time for service on the board of these institutions,—was that not unselfishness? Spinoza answers this question in his *Ethica*:¹¹¹ "The endeavor of doing or leaving out something, merely because we may thus please men, is called ambition (inordinate desire for honor), especially when we thoughtlessly endeavor to please the masses and thus omit or do something to the hurt of ourselves or some one else." That an action motivated by an inordinate desire for honor is selfishness, needs no further explanation. The fact alone, that the Dutch foundations by merchants were never made anonymously, speaks volumes. On the contrary, on the gates of the "hofjes," for instance, the noble-mindedness of the founders used to be sculptured in stone or marble, mostly in snorting phrases. The walls of the assembly halls, and the rooms, and even the walls of the corridors of the institutions for charity, were plastered with portraits in natural size, with the names, to perpetuate for all generations to come the beatific benefactors. Apart from this the Dutch charity was to a considerable extent fear. When Holland, about the middle of the seventeenth century, had reached the top of its prosperity, a seventh part of the whole population lived on charity. Count to this the masses of rabble who sneaked out of their caves, and holes, and slums, and filled the streets when there was something to plunder or to demolish,—then we shall understand that many times the heart of the rich merchant slid down into his expensive pants, and that he will have said to himself, that something needs to be done in order to prevent worse. So his charity was, in many cases, nothing but a burglary-insurance, a fire-insurance, a glass-insurance, and a life-insurance, in a really unusual form.

I think, we may conclude that Spinoza and the Dutch mer-

chants were pure egoists with the difference, however, that Spinoza owned up his egoism barefacedly, while the merchant denied his egoism shamefacedly, by posing as a paragon of altruism.

SPINOZA'S LIFE

What makes Spinoza's materialist philosophy so deeply impressive, is the fact that he not only taught but also lived what he taught. During the whole of the seventeenth century, his fellow-countrymen performed a dance around the Golden Calf with such a frenetic rapture as the world never had witnessed. Spinoza was one of the few to whom riches which were desired in order to come to honor and sensual delight, did not mean anything whatsoever. This self-sufficiency was already apparent when the first thunder-clouds gathered above his head. As the Jewish community learned that Spinoza stayed out of the Synagogue, rich Jews offered him an annuity of 1000 guilders, if only he promised to show himself from time to time. He declined that offer indignantly: "Not for ten thousand guilders."

In 1654 his father died. His sister Rebecca and the husband of his deceased sister Mirjam found that the miscreant Baruch ought to be cut out of the will. Spinoza had the law of them, probably only to convince them of their injustice. For, after having been righted, he declared that they could keep everything, if only they left him a good bed with curtains.

After his excommunication by Rabbi Saul Levi Morteira, he earned his living on lens-grinding. His yearly revenues did not surpass the one hundred guilder mark. When we hear that the philosopher Arnold Geulincx, as a professor at the University of Leyden, enjoyed a salary of 300 guilders a year, and that everybody in those days held the man for "gruwelijk arm" (terribly poor), we can imagine the poverty of the lens-grinder Spinoza with his yearly earnings of one hundred guilders.

In 1665, Simon Joosten de Vries, a friend and admirer of Spinoza, took pity on him and offered him 2000 guilders to enable him to take better care for himself. Although Spinoza was suffering from tuberculosis—which caused his early death—he thankfully declined the money. Thereupon de Vries informed him of his intention to nominate him to his unique heir. Spinoza

refused, on the ground that de Vries' brother needed the money more urgently. De Vries complied with Spinoza's wish but stipulated in his will that his brother should pay Spinoza a life-annuity of 500 guilders. On September 26, 1667, Simon Joosten de Vries died. His brother informed Spinoza of the clause of the will, but Spinoza accepted only 200 guilders.

Was Spinoza's accepting this annuity in contradiction with himself? By no means. During the life time of de Vries, he refused gifts for fear that the acceptance of the benefit might impair his freedom. After the death of his friend, he accepted a part of the legacy because he then no longer needed to be afraid for any infringement upon his freedom, the most precious thing he possessed. Interesting is, in this connection, what Spinoza wrote in his *Ethica* about benefits:¹¹² "The free man, who lives among ignorant people, [men not directed by reason], shall do his utmost to avoid their benefits. Proof: Every man has his own conception of what is good. The ignorant, who has conferred a benefit on any one, will evaluate this benefit according to his own disposition; and if he sees that the receiver estimates this benefit lower than he does, he will be pained. The free man desires to join other men to him in friendship, but he will not try to reciprocate their benefits with benefits, which the other ones, according to their viewpoint, hold for equivalent. What will he do? He will try to lead himself and others according to the free judgment of reason and do only those things which he knows to be of primary importance. The result will be that the free man, lest he should be disrespected by others, and lest he should be governed not by their desire or appetite but by reason alone, endeavors as far as possible to avoid their benefits. Note: 'I say as far as possible.' For, although men are ignorant, they are nevertheless men, who in time of necessity can confer human aid, which under certain circumstances may be greatly valuable. Therefore, it may happen that some times we cannot do without accepting a benefit and, thus, show our gratitude in a way, which they find suitable. Moreover, we must be careful in refusing benefits, in order to evitate the semblance of disregarding the benefactors or of being afraid from greed to reciprocate those benefits. Therefore, by trying to avoid their hatred, we could

incite them against us still more. In avoiding benefits, we should thus allow for what is suitable and becoming."

It is therefore that Spinoza teaches us, that only among free men gratitude is possible. "When men are driven only by blind desire, the gratitude, which they show each other, will mostly be more a business transaction or a trap than gratitude."¹¹³

What freedom was for Spinoza, can be gathered from the inscriptions of the five books of his *Ethica*. They are: I "On Nature"; II. "On the nature and the origin of the soul." III. "On the origin and the nature of the affects"; IV. "On human servitude or on the power of the affects"; V. "On the power of the mind or on human freedom." So, three of the five parts deal with freedom; the third part with freedom at large; the fourth part with negative freedom; the fifth part with positive freedom. In *Ethica*¹¹⁴ Spinoza explains what he understands by freedom, by specifying the difference between a free man and a servant. A free man subjects himself to nobody, but to himself. He is his own master. He does all that he considers of importance for him. He desires what is good, but not because it is of importance for him, but it is of importance for him *because* he desires it. The most important, the most profitable is to conserve his nature, to pull through at any time and under all circumstances and at the expense of anything. A servant, an unfree man, is a person who is not himself, who does not follow his mind, but who is led by persons or things without him. At the end of the fifth part, Spinoza puts the welfare, the beatitude, and freedom on a par level. Quite understandable, because the highest happiness of man is the intellectual love of Nature. This intellectual love is, as explained before, the conscious union of man with all that exists. This is possible only when under the guidance of reason, we *free* ourselves from all influences, especially from passions which try to affect us from without. Highest happiness is not a reward for the fight of man for his freedom, but highest happiness is his freedom.

Freedom, as we have seen in the Chapter on Government, was also the motive for Spinoza's preference of the democratic form of government, democracy alone guarantees the freedom of thinking.

I now pick up where I have left off in my enumeration of some facts that prove that Spinoza practiced what he theorized.

Interesting is what Colerus wrote about Spinoza's way of life: "It is hardly credible how thriftily and moderately he used to live, not forced by poverty—plenty of money was offered to him—but from an innate soberness and frugality . . . [this] may be proved by several small reckonings which have been found amongst his Papers after his death. It appears by them that he lived a whole day upon a Milk-soup done with Butter, which amounted to three pence, and upon a Pot of Beer of three half-pence. Another day he [did] eat nothing but Gruel done with Raisins and Butter, and that dish cost him four pence half penny. There are but two half pints of Wine at most for one Month to be found amongst those Reckonings, and though he was often invited to eat with his Friends, he preferred to live upon what he had at home . . . He was very careful to cast up his Accounts every Quarter; which he did, that he might spend neither more nor less than what he could [afford] every year. And he would say sometimes to the people of the House that he was like a Serpent, who forms a circle with his Tail in his mouth; to denote that he had nothing left at the year's end." According to von Dunin-Borkowski, in time of war, Spinoza must have starved with his 25 Dutch (10 American) cents a day. And let us not forget that in the seventeenth century it was constantly war.

In 1673, Professor J. Ludwig Fabritius inquired, whether Spinoza would be prepared to accept a call to the University of Heidelberg as a professor of philosophy. Fabritius asked this in the name of Charles Louis of the Palatinate. Spinoza answered on March 30: . . . "Since it was never my intention to give public instruction, I cannot be induced to embrace this glorious opportunity, although I have debated the matter with myself so long. For, first, if I want to find time for instructing youth, then I must desist from developing my philosophy. Secondly, I do not understand within what limits that freedom of philosophizing must be confined in order to avoid the appearance of wishing to disturb the publicly established Religion. For theological disputes arise not so much from an ardent love of religion as from men's various dispositions, or the love of contradiction . . . I have already experienced these things while leading a private and

solitary life; much more are they to be feared after I shall have risen to the Degree of dignity. Thus, you see, Most Honored Sir, that I am not holding back in the hope of some better fortune, but from love of peace, which I believe I can obtain to a certain extent merely by refraining from public lectures . . ." His answer boiled down amounts to this: my freedom is of more worth than a handful of money.

A similar answer Spinoza gave to Lieutenant-Colonel Stoupe, a Swiss mercenary in the service of the Prince of Condé, who had invaded the Netherlands. Stoupe wanted to procure for Spinoza an annuity from Louis XIV of France. Spinoza thanked him politely and declared that he did not intend to dedicate one of his books to the King. His biographers report more events to prove his freedom and independence which were most of the time not to the taste of Spinoza's contemporaries. Maybe herein is to be seen the reason why the great and renowned Constantine Huygens (1596-1687) could not abide him. Huygens did not even call him by his name. He used to speak of Spinoza as "the Jew of Voorburg" or the "Israelite." Huygens found that Spinoza was a good lens-grinder, but a poor philosopher. Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibnitz (1646-1716) did not like Spinoza either. Bertrand Russell¹¹⁵ reports: "Leibnitz, who owed much to him, concealed his debt, and carefully abstained from saying a word in his praise, he even went so far as to lie about the extent of his personal acquaintance with the heretic Jew." . . . "The last important influence on Leibnitz' philosophy was that of Spinoza, whom he visited in 1676. Leibnitz spent a month in frequent discussions with Spinoza, and secured part of the *Ethics* in manuscript. In later years he joined in decrying Spinoza, and minimized his contacts with him, saying he had met him once, and Spinoza had told some good anecdotes about politics . . ."

Other people of importance, as the duke of Luxembourg, who met Spinoza in Utrecht, in 1673; the Grand Pensionary Johan de Wit, who many times consulted him; and other high ranking officials of the Dutch Government, respected him because of his taking frankness, his pride, and his honesty.¹¹⁶

He died as he had lived. In *Ethica*¹¹⁷ he writes: "A free man thinks of nothing less than of death; and his whole wisdom is a meditation not of death, but of life." On the last day of his life

he was absolutely quiet, in contrast to Socrates who was rather excited and preferred a theatrical finale. Spinoza conversed with his visitors on all kinds of subjects that concerned *them* personally. After they had left, he passed away, alone. His friends found the manuscript of his *Ethica* in a drawer with the notice: if it ever should be published, they better leave his name out. What did honor mean to him? He was buried in a grave without name, together with four more starvelings. On June 6, 1678, the University of Leyden required that his *Opera posthuma* should be burnt. Next June 25, the States of Holland paid the last "respects" to Spinoza by prohibiting his works on the heaviest penalties. And the Calvinist minister Car. Timman suggested the following epitaph: "Spit on this grave. Here lies Spinoza! If only his doctrine would be buried with him. The stench would then no longer cause soul pest."

ONENESS AND SAMENESS OF BODY AND SOUL

Spinoza started his philosophy as a Cartesian. He found the doctrine of the French philosopher so important that he tried to divulgate the Cartesian principles in his first book with the title: *Renati des Cartes principium philosophiae, More geometrico demonstrata*, Amsterdam, 1663.

Descartes was a dualist and an idealist.

Spinoza soon became a monist and a materialist.

According to Descartes, man consists of two parts: body and soul, each of which is a substance. And man's soul consists of two absolute faculties: intellect and will.

Spinoza took over the terminology of Descartes: he too taught that man consists of body and soul, and the soul of "intellectus" and "voluntas," but he deviates from his former master by denying that there are in the soul absolute faculties of apprehension, willing, desiring, etc.¹¹⁸ "These and such like faculties are either entirely fictitious, or nothing else than metaphysical generalizations, which we are wont to form from concrete things. Therefore, intellect and will have reference in the same manner to this or that idea, or to this or that volition as stoneness to this or that stone, or like man to Peter and Paul." In the next proposition¹¹⁹ Spinoza continues: "There is in the soul no volition or affirmation

and negation save that which the idea, in so far as it is an idea, involves. Proof: There is in the soul no absolute faculty of willing and unwilling, but only individual volitions such as this or that affirmation and this or that negation. Let us conceive then any individual volition, namely, the mode of thinking, whereby the soul affirms that the three angles of a triangle are equal to the two right angles. This affirmation involves the conception or idea of the triangle, that is, without the idea of the triangle it cannot be conceived. It is the same when I say that A involves the conception of B, as when I say that A cannot be conceived without B. So this affirmation can also not be without the idea of the triangle. Therefore, this affirmation cannot exist or be conceived without the idea of the triangle. Moreover, this idea of the triangle must involve the same affirmation, namely, that its three angles are equal to two right angles. Wherefore, *vice versa* also, this idea of the triangle cannot exist or be conceived without this affirmation: and therefore, this affirmation appertains to the essence of the idea of a triangle, nor is anything else than that. And what we have said of this volition (for it was selected at random) can be said of any other volition, namely, that it is nothing but the idea." Spinoza continues in his corollary: "Will and intellect are one and the same thing. Proof: Will and intellect are nothing but the individual volitions and ideas themselves. Now the individual volition and the individual idea are one and the same thing. Therefore will and intellect are one and the same thing."

When we summarize Spinoza's theory, it amounts to this. We distinguish in the soul different functions of thinking, willing, loving, etc. The philosophers before Spinoza concluded from the existence of these functions, the existence of separate centers, faculties, departments, organs, powers, in the soul, each of which would perform its definite function. Spinoza rejects this assumption, on the ground, that all these functions are essentially the same.

But there is still another point of divergence from the doctrine of Descartes. Man consists of body and soul (Spinoza uses for soul the Latin word "mens," which properly means "mind"). Descartes considers the soul the most important part of man. Spinoza thinks that the body is superior by far: the body is

always dominating and thus primary, whereas the mind is subordinated and dependent on the body, and thus secondary. He proves this:¹²⁰ "The more a body is apt above others to perform and to undergo many actions at the same time, the more its mind will be able above others to perceive many things at the same time; and the more the actions of a body depend solely on itself, and the less other bodies concur with its action, the more its mind is apt for distinct understanding." Consequently, not only the achievements of the (sensuous) perceptions, but the achievements of the (intellectual) apperceptions are dependent on the greater or smaller excellence of the body, concludes Franz Erhardt.¹²¹

Spinoza tries to convince us further of the superiority of the body by focusing our attention on the affects. According to Descartes affects ("affectiones") are situations of the *soul*, as already the title of his book: *Les passions de l'âme* (1650) proves. According to Spinoza, affects are situations of the *body* by which the power ("virtus") of the body is increased, or diminished, strengthened or weakened. A requisite, however, is that our mind is conscious, that it has an "imago" ("Vorstellung," mental representation) of these situations. Besides, the mind cannot have any knowledge of itself save in so far as it perceives the modifications of the body. "The mind cannot comprehend itself but in so far as it contemplates the ideas of the modifications of the body."¹²²

With the statement of the superiority of the body (in contradistinction to Descartes' superiority of the soul), Spinoza is not content. He goes farther, by declaring that body and mind are, in fact one and the same thing. Seen under the attribute of thinking we call it mind, seen under the attribute of the extension, we call the same thing body. He writes:¹²³ "In the same way as the substance of Nature as existing in the mind, and the substance as existing in space, are one and the same substance, so is a modus existing in the extension and the idea of this modus, one and the same thing only expressed in different ways." And on another place¹²⁴ Spinoza explains that this principle also applies to the modus man: "Soul and body are one and the same thing, that one time is comprehended under the attribute of thinking, another time under the attribute of the extension."

Franz Erhardt concludes: "The identity of body and soul thus means: What seen from without, we call body; that is seen from within called soul. The soul is nothing but the reflex of the body, which reflex is produced in the form of a conscious representation. The soul is just the idea of the body."¹²⁵

If it is true that the soul is nothing but the idea that man conceives of his body, then the action of thinking must be a function of the body, unless we accept the incongruity that a thought can think. How did man come to the erroneous acceptance that the soul thinks? Maybe he came to it by the observation of the continuous changes of the ideas, the interrelation of the ideas, and their succession, which make it look as if the soul thinks freely and independently of the body. In fact, all the changes of the ideas and their logical interconnection are the automatic reflexes of what happens in the body which is uninterruptedly subject to an infinite series of active and passive "affectiones." Standing before a mirror, we observe the motions of our eyes, our mouth, the muscles of our face, etc. No normal person will mistake the changes of the body for changes caused by the mirror or by the image behind the glass. The mirror reflects mechanically what the body acts or undergoes. The same parallelism is there between the changes of the body and the changes of the soul. The latter are only the registration of what the former goes through.

There is another proposition in the *Ethica* which cannot be understood unless we presuppose that Spinoza was convinced of the materialness of thinking. He writes:¹²⁶ "The first that constitutes the real being ("esse") of the human mind is nothing but the idea of a really existing individual thing." What is an idea? There can be no doubt that an idea is the result of thinking. But then arises the question: Who or what thinks? The mind? Absolutely impossible, because the mind does not yet exist. It will only begin to exist when the action of thinking has advanced so far as to result in an idea. But, if the mind is not thinking then nothing remains but the acceptance that the body thinks, that is to say, the highest organized parts of the body, thanks to which man essentially distinguishes himself from an animal. This part of the body was formerly called soul, and Spinoza still uses the old terminology, but he understands by

soul something else than formerly was meant by this word. The function is still the same, but the subject is for Spinoza no longer the soul as a *part of man*, especially created by God for the function of thinking, but a *part of the body* of man. Therefore Spinoza could still write: "The soul forms ideas because it is a thinking thing." This is absolutely correct, in the presupposition that soul is a part of the body of man, and not an independent part of man. That must have been the conception of Spinoza otherwise he could not assert that body and soul are one and the same thing.

It was not for nothing that Spinoza avails himself of all occasions to remind us:¹²⁷ "Nobody has as yet made out what the body of man is able to, that is to say, nobody has up to now determined experimentally what the body, just according to the laws of nature, is able to, or unable to . . . Nobody knows the construction of the body so precisely that he can explain all its functions . . . Consequently when people say that this or that action of the body originated from the soul which dominates the body, they do not know what they say. They just confirm with high sounding words, that they ignore the real cause of the action, without even being astonished at it."

In the seventeenth century, there were two philosophical schools which explained the relation between the individual mind and its body in a contrasting way:

To the first school belonged the *dualists*, who taught the separation of mind and body, with Descartes (1596-1650) and Locke (1632-1704).

To the second school belonged the *monists* who stuck to the *identity* of body and mind. The monists can be subdistinguished into two classes:

a) the *materialist* monists, with Hobbes (1588-1679) and Spinoza (1632-1677), who contended that mind is just bodily function, and

b) the *idealist* monists with Leibniz (1646-1716), and Berkeley (1685-1753), who taught that body is only a mental appearance.

Ledgerwood¹²⁸ does not agree with the above classification of Spinoza. He thinks that Spinoza rather belongs to the Modern Neutral Monists, who accept that the totalness of body and mind

is a third reality which is neither bodily nor mental. I cannot see, how a totalness can be essentially different from its phenomena. Therefore, Spinoza seems to be closer to Hobbes than to the Neutralists.

If this interpretation of Spinoza's materialist monism is correct, the great Dutch philosopher would have anticipated to a certain extent:

a) the Mind-Stuff theories: Individual minds are constituted of psychic particles (thus matter) analogous to physical atoms;

b) the Mind-Dust theories: Individual minds result from the combination of particles (thus matter) which have always existed in association with material atoms, so that mind is a novel emergent in the process of biological evolution;

c) the latest Mind-Matter theories to which Bertrand Russell points:¹²⁹ "Modern science and philosophy seem to uphold Spinoza's theories: The dualism of mind and matter is out of date, matter has become more like mind, and mind has become more like matter, than seemed possible at an early stage of science."

AFFECTOLOGY: ACTIONS AND PASSIONS

The most notable relation between Spinoza and Rembrandt is to be seen herein that the philosophy of the former and the portrait and figure painting of the latter have exactly the same subject, to wit, the actions and passions of man; with the unessential difference that Spinoza as a philosopher had to deal with the affects in abstracto, and Rembrandt as a painter could deal only with the affects in concreto, thus, with the definite actions and passions of a definite individual. A similar difference is there between the materialism of Spinoza, who is concerned only with the material world in general, whereas the realist Rembrandt is concerned in his art only with the material world in particular, actual life in Holland.

For a better understanding of the relation between the two great men, I have to deliver presently an outline of Spinoza's affectology ("Affektenlehre"); Rembrandt's treatment of the actions and passions of man will be the subject of a later chapter.

The *Ethica* is divided into five parts. Spinoza has inscribed

the first part: "On God." He could as well have inscribed this part: "On Nature," because God and Nature were for him one and the same thing. In the first three parts of his *Ethica*, he uses only the word "God." In the fourth part, he suddenly surprises us with the explicative remark that God and Nature are the same thing. He speaks, altogether five times, of "Deus sive Natura," and then the *Ethica* continues up till the end, without using the synonym "Nature." As I have already explained, Spinoza had a special reason to stick to the old terminology. He continued using the word "God," although he was a stalwart atheist; and in the same way he went on speaking of "soul," notwithstanding his professed materialist monism. I for one prefer the inscription: "On Nature," because the word "God" has a personal connotation which might be confusing.

The second part of the *Ethica* has the title: "On the nature and the origin of the mind." As I have explained in the last chapter, mind was for Spinoza the special part of the body that is supposed to perform the function of thinking.

These first two parts of the book are the indispensable metaphysical introduction to his affectology, which, thus, begins with the third part with the title: "On the origin and the nature of the affects." The fourth part is inscribed: "On human bondage or on the powers of the affects;" the fifth part: "On the power of the mind or on human freedom."

Now a survey of the contents of the single parts.

I. In the first part, Spinoza explains that Nature is the one, eternal, and infinite substance of all that exists.

The one substance is the "causa sui" (its own cause).

Therefore the essence of Nature necessarily implies its existence.

Nothing exists without or beyond Nature, in other words, there is neither a praeternatural, nor a supernatural world.

Nature reveals its essence under an infinite number of attributes (basic forms), of which only two are known to us:

the ideational form, in so far as Nature exists in the mind of man,

the material form, in so far as Nature exists in the extension.

All individual things (material as well as ideational) are manifestations (modi) of one of the two known attributes of

the one substance, and are in so far as they are material, subject to the eternal laws of nature; and in so far as they are ideational, they are, of course, directly dependent on the material things of which they are the ideas, and indirectly on the laws of nature, to which these material things are subject.

We know these individual things under the same forms as we know the one substance:

under an ideational form, in so far as they exist in our thoughts.

under a material form in so far as they exist in the extension.

The one substance is free, that is to say, it is not determined by causes from without, but determined by itself.

The individual things are not free, but determined by things without them.

The individual things may be called free only in respect of other individual things, thus, in so far as they have in themselves the power to maintain their existence and their essence.

II. In the second part, Spinoza tries to build, on the metaphysical-foundations laid down in the first part, the principles of his affectology.

Because the oneness of the substance must necessarily come to the fore in the uniformity of the series of modi of the single attributes, the series of modi of the two attributes known to us (thinking and extension) cannot but respond to each other in perfect conformity.

Therefore, to every body belongs an idea, of which the body is the object, and which, so to say, constitutes its soul. The human soul (better: mind) is, thus, the idea of the human body.

The science of the mind is, thus, a science of ideas, and results in a theory of human knowledge.

Spinoza distinguishes three ways of knowing:

1) The mental representation ("imaginatio," "Vorstellung") consists of inadequate ideas, based on uncertain experiences and foreign authority.

2) The reason ("ratio," "Vernunft") deduces the truth from the "notiones communes" ("Gemeinbegriffe"), which can be best compared with Kant's categories. Knowledge through reason is adequate, necessary, and has all the characteristics of truth.

3) The intuitive knowledge is the highest way of knowing. In the last book of the *Ethica*,¹³⁰ Spinoza explains that intuition apprehends the individual things not in their restriction to a definite time and a definite space, but in so far as they are contained in the totalness of all that exists, and, thus, follow from the one, eternal, and infinite substance of Nature.

The second part closes with an expatiation on the will of man.

There is no free will. All that happens and all human actions are determined from eternity. We think that we have a free will, because we see only our actions and ignore the things that have determined our actions.

Where there is no free will, there can be no good or evil. Good and bad are, therefore, not something real, they express only the relation of the things to our mind. Good-for-us is everything that increases our reality, conserves our essence, and makes us virtuous (in the sense of powerful).

III. In the third part of his *Ethica*, Spinoza comes to his theme proper, the affects. Directly affected is only the body, but always in a conscious way, that is to say, man will always have an idea of the affected body, and thus, indirectly, of the affects.

Affects are either actions that man performs, or passions that man undergoes.

An affect is an action, when the affect is the only, thus, the complete cause of the result. This will be the case only when the affect is based on adequate ideas.

An affect is a passion when the affect is at least partially the result of influences from without. This will always happen when inadequate ideas have played a part.

There are three basic affects: desire, joy, and sadness.

Desire is the natural drift of man to self-preservation, and implies, thus, the affirmation of the idea of the essence of man, and the affirmation of all that necessarily follows from this adequate idea.

Man, consequently, does not desire something, because he finds it good, but he finds something good, because he desires it.

Joy is the idea, that expresses the increase of the natural urge to self-preservation.

Sadness is the idea that represents a decrease of the urge to self-preservation.

All other affects can be reduced to these three. They differ from each other depending on their mutual combinations, or on their combination with the ideas of other objects.

IV. In the fourth part of the *Ethica*, Spinoza elucidates the causes why we are so often the sport of our passions, and describes the power with which they master us.

Because passions are based on inadequate ideas, and these inadequate ideas come from others, from without, we are subject to foreign influences.

The main thing is, therefore, to have adequate ideas, in other words, we must be directed by the reason. That is the best we can do to intensify our urge to self-conservation, and to attain the highest possible reality.

The highest virtue is thus self-affirmation.

If every one should think in this way, and every one should be directed by the reason, all men would live in complete agreement, and the public welfare would be best served.

V. In the fifth part, Spinoza explains how man can free himself from bad affects (passions); and what the results are of a cultivation of good affects (actions).

The supreme good, then, is the possession of adequate ideas on the most perfect way of knowledge, thus, through intuition.

Adequate knowledge makes us see the things not in their transitory, but in their eternal relations, and therefore, is this kind of knowledge eternal, just as the objects of this knowledge are eternal.

He concludes: the highest happiness of man is to be absorbed by, and to become consciously one with the eternal and infinite Nature.

I followed in great lines the survey by which Otto Baansch introduces his translation into German of Spinoza's *Ethica*.¹³¹

The difference of Spinoza's affectology from Descartes' psychology is twofold. Spinoza teaches that the *body* of man is affected, and that the mind only reflects the affected body. Man is, thus, conscious of the affects. Descartes, on the contrary, thinks

that the *soul* is affected. Rembrandt, as we shall see later, does not distinguish between man's exterior and interior, between body and soul. He just *lives* the totalness of man, and consequently he paints man as a totalness.

The second divergence from Descartes is that Spinoza deals with the affects genetically: he analyzes where they come from, how they develop, and how we have to direct the passions. His affectology is *dynamic*. This is especially visible in the last sentences of his *Ethica*.¹³² He compares the life of man with a road, on which man has to move on continuously, although the end is hardly ever reached. He mentions that only a few have the courage to take this road, because they feel unconsciously that every step forwards is not a continuation, but a beginning all over again. But the almost unattainableness of the aim should make them aware of the supremeness of happiness that awaits them at the end.

Descartes takes a *static* viewpoint. He does not emphasize the process, but contents himself with the statement of the status, as Racine, Molière, Bach, etc. did, who likewise were not interested in the fluctuations and undulations of the affects, but solely in the effects of the affects on the surrounding world.

RELIGIOUS ATHEISM

In the seventeenth century many new tendencies sprouted out which developed to full maturity only in the eighteenth century, the *Century of Enlightenment*. To these progressive tendencies belonged atheism. It is not possible to prove statistically how strong this movement was during the life of Spinoza, but the comprehensive anti-atheistic literature of the first half of the seventeenth century gives us an idea of the growth and the extension of freethinking in the religious field. I have to mention in this context the work by the Franciscan Marinus Mersenne with the title *Quaestiones*¹³³ in which we find a list of famous atheists. In Paris alone there were, according to Mersenne about 50,000 of them. Another work by Mersenne *L'impieté*¹³⁴ is a further affirmation that the Church of those days considered atheism the most threatening danger. Two more books give us an idea of the popularity of freethinking, Tholossanus' *Syntaxis*¹³⁵ and

Hardouin's *Opera varia*¹³⁶ with a special chapter inscribed "Athei detecti" (unmasked atheists).

Holland did not remain exempt, after what Tholuck¹³⁷ in his manuscript reports. We are told that atheism was exuberant in growth, especially in the medical faculty of the University of Leyden. A third of the professors and students were atheists.

The greatest atheist of the seventeenth century was Spinoza. He could not but land there, since atheism is the necessary logical consequence of materialism. Spinoza tried to disguise his atheism by using the name of God in his books as well as in his letters, but the dominés in Holland and his former coreligionists, the Jews in Amsterdam, understood that the name of God was just a religious camouflage "pour besoin de la cause." Spinoza adapted himself to the mental capacity of the vulgar and stuck to the old terminology in order to find a benevolent ear to his new ideas. But the Hollanders could not be misled, and the intellectuals of the foreign countries, likewise, did not hesitate a moment in their conviction of Spinoza's atheism. The great French philosopher Pierre Bailie (1647-1706) wrote in his *Dictionnaire*¹³⁸ "Il a été un athée de système et d'une méthode toute nouvelle" (He was a systematic atheist and one with a quite new method); and in his *Pensées*:¹³⁹ "C'était le plus grand athée qui ait jamais été" (He was the greatest atheist that ever lived).

However, in the credulous romantic nineteenth century many a one mistook the outward appearance for the reality. Novalis, Friedrich von Hardenberg (1772-1801)¹⁴⁰ exalted and glorified Spinoza as a "Gottbetrunkenener Mensch" (a God-intoxicated man). Ernest Renan (1823-1892), on the occasion of the Jubilee of Spinoza's death in 1877; and Wilhelm Windelband on the same occasion, celebrated Spinoza as a "God-intoxicated saint" and could not extol enough his "religious" character. In respect of his religiosity they were right.

Leclerc¹⁴¹ reports that Spinoza originally wrote his *Ethica* without mentioning God at all, but that his friends advised him to call Nature God, lest the publication might cause an undescribable scandal. Spinoza gave in, but to make clear that God meant for him nothing but Nature, he added on five places of the fourth part: "Deus sive Natura" (God, but you can just as well say Nature).

In his *De intellectus emendatione* he still writes, as has already been remarked, that supreme happiness consists of the unity of our soul with *Nature*. In the *Ethica* he formulates the same thing in other words, and calls supreme happiness "amor Dei intellectualis" (the unity of our mind with *God*).

Interesting, in this respect, are his letters. Writing to Oldenburg, Spinoza uses the word *Nature*, because the not very religious President of the Royal Academy of Science in London would not be shocked. In his correspondence with the former burgomaster of Amsterdam, the religious Johan Hudde, Spinoza speaks only of *God* and leaves the word *Nature* out.

Spinoza had the noblest intentions with his atheism. He tried to sublimate, that is to say, to purge *God* from all *human* qualities with which former generations had thought to honor him. But this well meant honor was, in the estimation of Spinoza, a dishonor, even if the human qualities were attributed to *God* in the highest potency. What Spinoza, therefore, was driving at was—on close inspection—a restoration of the honor of *God*, the worth of *God*, an act of worship (A. S. Weorthsripe), and thus religion!

A disanthropomorphization of *God* can be effected in two ways: either it is an *an-nihil-ation*, a reduction to "nihil," to a nothingness; or a *material-lization*, a reduction to matter. *God*, in a way of speaking, was only materialized. But the name, and the halo of sanctity inseparably connected with the name, were used by Spinoza, in order to sanctify, magnify, glorify, deify, the eternal and infinite *Matter*. Spinoza thus tried to sublimate his materialism to a religion. The Hollanders had elevated matter (gold) to their idol, Spinoza's *God* was not an idol, but the holiest that ever existed, *Nature*.

Spinoza's dehumanization of the piteously humanized *God* worked out in this way. He began with the statement that *God* must have an infinity of attributes, of which we know only two; the attribute of existence in the extension, and the attribute of existence in our thinking. In the *Ethica*¹⁴² he refuted explicitly the reasons that could be brought forward to disprove the materialness of *God*.

Spinoza's materialization of *God* is not a blasphemy; *God* himself has divinized matter by using it for the incarnation of his son *Jesus*.

Spinoza elucidated his standpoint further in his letter No. 73 (21). He conceived of God in quite an other way than the Christians did. He for one did not believe in a personal God, in a God with intellect and will, and with all the other moral qualities ascribed to him. He did not believe that God has an objective with his actions, that he had created the world after a plan. Creation of the world in time could not but be a fiction, since all that exists is eternal, and can not stop existing. But is thinking, as an attribute of God not in contradiction with God's existence in the extension? By no means, Spinoza answers, because he did not make out of God a thinking and willing thing. In his *Tractatus brevis*¹⁴³ he writes: "The mind as a reality, whether it is finite or infinite, and likewise the will, the desire, love, etc. belong to natured Nature, and not to naturing Nature." In his *Ethica*¹⁴⁴ he writes: "When intellect and will should belong to the eternal essence of God, these two attributes would indubitably mean something else than what man understands by them. For the intellect and the will, which would constitute God's essence, and our intellect and our will, would have nothing in common but the name. The star the Dog (of the constellation Canis major) is something else than the barking animal on earth that we call dog." He denies in his letter No. 50 (60) that God can see and hear and perceive and will. Why should he? Are these attributes really such enormous perfections? "It would be just as silly as if a triangle should maintain that God is triangular in the most eminent way; and the circle should assert that God is circular." The supposition alone that God possesses these qualities, is already a blasphemy. God would no longer be God.

In his *Tractatus theologico-politicus* Spinoza deals with the power of God. This power and the power of Nature are identical, and the power of nature can be nothing but the totality of power of all things together. Beyond the totality of natural power, there is no power. And that is also valid for God, because God is Nature. Man, thus, is not created by God but just engendered, as Spinoza put it in his letter (No. 4) to Oldenburg. The body has always existed, how ever in another form. God is not the ruler of the world either. There is no divine order, nor divine law. There is nothing but the laws of nature. If there are no laws, there cannot be a morale, in the sense as the Christians assume.

No more is there good or evil. Good is all that affirms, and evil is all that negates our essence. There is no heaven, nor hell. Praying to God, to thank him for his mercy and grace, or imploring his help, thus is pure nonsense.

Has Spinoza made his point? It seems to me, that many definitions and axioms, which he promises, are more hypothetical than categorical. But, whatever standpoint we take, Spinoza's honesty and sincerity, and the respectful way he deals with this utterly delicate subject, and especially his noble intention to give the world a new Cosmic Religion, instead of the old religion with its often sacrilegious anthropomorphizations of God, reserve our admiration. Spinoza was a religious atheist. What about Rembrandt? Whether he was an atheist, nobody can tell. It seems most likely. But atheist or not, Rembrandt was certainly not religious, which I shall try to substantiate later.

INTUITION

What Spinoza understood by intuition, has already been touched upon. He calls Nature the one, eternal and infinite substance, which can be conceived of as existing in reality, or as existing in the mind. All individual things are *modi*, or manifestations, or phenomena of Nature. It follows from this that adequate knowledge of individual things can never be obtained when we isolate them from the totalness of Nature to which they belong;¹⁴⁵ but only when we see them as phenomena, thus in relation to the totalness of all that exists. Isolating the individual things and seeing them by themselves, can lead only to an inadequate knowledge, that is to say, a knowledge of their existence, but not a comprehension of their sense, in other words, we know *that* they exist, but we ignore *why* they exist, and *why* in just this form.

A factualist who contents himself with the statement, the delimitation, the ordering, and registering of facts, needs no intuition. A synthesist who is interested in the relation between the facts and the relation of each single fact to the whole, cannot do without intuition. Bertrand Russell¹⁴⁶ confirms Spinoza's conception of intuition. He writes: "The essential character of intuition is that it does not divide the world into separate

things, as the intellect does; . . . we might describe it as *synthetic* rather than *analytic*."

Intuition has been discredited, especially by the Positivists, who considered it to be the greatest danger that science ever can incur; but nowadays no one less than Albert Einstein has re-elevated intuition in its former rank. He writes:¹⁴⁷ "*I believe in intuition* and inspiration . . . At times I feel certain I am right while not knowing the reason. When the eclipse of 1919 confirmed my *intuition*, I was not in the least surprised. In fact, I should have been astonished had it turned out otherwise. For *knowledge is limited, whereas imagination embraces the entire world*, stimulating progress, giving birth to evolution. It is, strictly speaking, a real factor in scientific research." In the same book¹⁴⁸ Albert Einstein remarks: "Intellectuals [factualists] always have microscopes before their eyes." They do no longer see the whole, whereas¹⁴⁹ "the basis of all scientific work is the conviction that the *world* is an ordered and *comprehensive* entity" . . . "We try to compose a comprehensive picture of the *world*."¹⁵⁰ And in *The Evolution of Physics*,¹⁵¹ Albert Einstein and Leopold Infeld maintain: "Science is not just a collection of laws, a catalogue of *unrelated facts*. It is a creation of the human mind, with freely *invented* ideas and concepts. Physical theories try to form a picture of reality and to establish its *connection with the wide world* of sense impressions." In the Preface of this book we read: "Here is no systematic course in elementary physical facts and theories. Our intention was rather to sketch in broad outline the attempts of the human mind to find a *connection between the world of ideas and the world of phenomena*. We have tried to show the active process which compels science to *invent* ideas corresponding to the reality of our world." All Italics mine.

In a later chapter, I shall try to substantiate that also in respect of their approach to the surrounding world, Spinoza and Rembrandt are intimately related.

FUNCTIONAL STYLE

It is understandable that many readers of Spinoza's *Ethica* feel irritated by what they call his utterly dry style. It is true, the *Ethica* is so dry that it reads like an office book. But then

it has the mathematical precision, accuracy, and conclusiveness of an office book, that it would not have if Spinoza had used, let me say, the ornate, inflated, rhetorical style of the nature philosophers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: Girolamo Cardano (1501-1576), Benardino Telesio (1506?-1588), Francesco Patrizzi (1519-1587), Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), Tommaso Campanella (1568-1639). The *Ethica* could not have been written in a style more appropriate to the *purpose* and the *contents* of the book, than in the style Spinoza chose. The purpose of the book was not to please the prospective readers but to convince them of the truth of his philosophy of life. And the contents of the book is a rather intricate structure of propositions, the conclusiveness of which was based directly or indirectly on a number of definitions and axioms, in the same way as the propositions of Euclid's *Elements* depended on the self-evident truths that he had premised. Spinoza's philosophy was thus conceived *more geometrico* and, therefore, the presentation of his doctrine had likewise to be *more geometrico*. The style of the *Ethica* thus is *functional*.

The *mos geometricus* was not an invention of Spinoza. Already Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) had asserted that mathematics was the only solid groundwork of science at large; and before Spinoza, Hobbes (1588-1679) and Descartes (1596-1650) had already applied mathematics for their philosophical discourses, however not with the unbending rigidity of the *Ethica*.

It is evident that there is a relation between Spinoza and Simon Stevin, which does not mean that Spinoza must have read the books of the mathematician and engineer, or have been acquainted by tradition with Stevin's ideas. Relation is not *per se* and exclusively causal. A relation is also there when two persons have been exposed to the same influences of their times, and built up their world from the same raw material. When general influences occasionally cause no, or even contrary effects, then mostly the ground for final divergences has been that certain factors,—in Holland of the seventeenth century, for instance, the “*deftigheid*” (sweledom) of the parvenus,—have obstructed the crystallization that was effectuated in Simon Stevin and Spinoza. We shall see later that the realist painters and poets, but over and above all, Rembrandt after his alteration about

1635, manifested in their art the same parsimony, the same austerity, the same horror of decorativism, of prefabricated forms, of rhetorical bombast, of theatricality, of mendacious or meretricious pathos, as Stevin and Spinoza displayed.

ARTS IN HOLLAND

ARTS IN GENERAL

If I had to put the process of seventeenth century Dutch art *in general* into the form of a diagram, I should draw a curve steadily ascending from about 1600 till about the middle of the century where the curve would reach its peak. From approximately 1660 on the curve would descend till it reaches at the end of the century the low from which it started.

It is, of course, not accidental that a diagram of Holland's power in the seventeenth century would describe about the same curve. During the first half of the century Holland grew richer and richer and more powerful; during the second half Holland was three times defeated in three consecutive wars with England. A fourth war with France ended with an invasion of the Republic by the troops of Condé. In the same period the immense colonial empire of Holland began to creak, and then to crack, and finally to crumble in all continents, so that actually of the old glory nothing more was left but the West-Indies, which nobody wanted because they were more a liability than a colony.

The logical relation between the blooming period of the arts and the booming period of trade is obvious. Art is a luxury. Once a country is rich, much money is spent on works of art, first, to display the wealth of the inhabitants; second, because good art is a good investment. During the Dutch "Golden Age," artists from everywhere immigrated in great numbers. As soon as the gold of the Golden Age began to lose its lustre, artists and talented young men emigrated and moved abroad where they thought to find better chances than in their native country. So far, as for a diagram of the arts *in general*.

A diagram of seventeenth century Dutch art *in particular*, thus, with separate curves for each art genre, would have quite different an aspect. During the first half of the century only literature (comedy and songs) and painting would show an

ascending curve, whereas the curves of architecture, sculpture, tragedy, epic, lyrics, and music would be an horizontal line with hardly any perceptible fluctuations.

It is clear that the cause of the highs of some art genres, and the simultaneous lows of other genres, cannot be reduced to the economy of the country. An explanation of the qualitative and quantitative divergences at the same time, can only be found by a method of history, which rejects the exclusive reduction of all manifestations of life to the economy as the basic cause of all the happenings in the upper structure, but holds that life is a totalness which manifests itself in an infinite number of phenomena. Because life is always utterly complicate, and intricate, and contradictory—therefore it is life—we cannot but expect the most contradictory profiles in the phenomena.

Life in Holland, as we have seen, became in the first part of the seventeenth century more and more materialist, in the vulgar sense of the word. Wealth, bodily satisfactions, sensuous pleasures, were the only value for the Dutch upstart. And the richer he became the more his innate lust of reality luxuriated into a veritable obsession of reality. The parvenu, of course, required that the material values which he considered to be paramount, were reflected in his art. A philosopher can deal with materialism in abstracto, not so an artist. In a materialist period, he can paint only material things in concreto, therefore we call him a realist. Here we have the explanation of the high quality of some art genres and the simultaneous mediocrity in other domains of art. Realism means fidelity to nature and to real life, representation of the reality without idealization. Realism, thus, offers the greatest chances to those genres that are most appropriate to depict the reality: theater, songs, and painting; whereas architecture, sculpture, tragedies, epics, lyrics, and especially music have so good as no possibilities.

The most privileged art genre for the depiction of real life is comedy. The stage has the greatest immediacy, because it is visible even in a tridimensional way, audible, and besides it is an art in time. Painting is only twodimensional (the third dimension is just imaginary). Painting is mute. And painting is restricted to one single moment. But in one respect painting is superior to stage art. It can represent the simultaneity of happen-

ings whereas stage art is many times obliged to decompose the simultaneity into an unreal succession of happenings. Painting is thus the next best medium for the imitation of actual life.

Sculpture has a notable asset above painting, thanks to its tridimensionality which possibilizes an infinity of profiles, whereas painting has only one. But what makes sculpture less appropriate to a realistic representation of life is, first, the usual lack of color. But a sculptor can paint his statues? Yes, at the expense of the form. Every material demands its special technique. Paint invisibilizes the material and herewith irrationalizes the form conditioned by the material. Another disadvantage of sculpture is that it has no space. The space the statues occupy is not the space of the figure but the space of the marble, the wood, or the bronze. A statue is always unrealistic.

W. Martin, Director of the Mauritshuis in the Hague, and Professor at the University of Leyden, gives another reason for the lack of sculptures in Holland's seventeenth century. He asserts, that the Hollanders never have been a people of sculptors. That is a reply but not an answer. In fact, it is repeating the question in other words. Every one who reads this wisdom will ask: Why were the Hollanders no people of sculptors? Apart from this, the assertion of Martin is not true. There has never been so rabid an iconoclasm as in Holland during the second part of the sixteenth century. The Hollanders could not have been a people of iconoclasts, if they had not been a people of sculptors and woodcarvers. And the relatively few remnants that are still in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and in the Episcopal Museums of Harlem and Utrecht which narrowly escaped the furious vandalism, prove indubitably that the plastic arts in Holland had a high quality.

Holland's backwardness in sculpture, during the whole of the seventeenth century, may be gathered from the fact that foreign sculptors used to be engaged for the plastic decoration of public buildings. For instance, Artus Quellinus (1609-1668), a South-Netherlander was entrusted in 1648 with the decoration of the new Townhall in Amsterdam. There were in Holland only two sculptors of importance, that is to say, of local importance. Compared with their colleagues in Italy and France, they were at best poor average. Their names are Hendrik de Keyser

(1565-1621), a left-over of the sixteenth century; and Rombout Verhulst (1624-1696), a native from Malines. The chef d'oeuvre of de Keyser is the bombastic sepulchral monument for Prince William I of Orange in de Nieuwe Kerk at Delft. It was not even original bombast, but a dull copy of the mausoleum (1564-1570) for Henry II and Catharina de Medicis in the Cathedral of St. Denis, executed by Germain Pilon, after a design of Primaticcio. Verhulst specialized in grave monuments for naval heroes.

In *architecture*, Holland had in the seventeenth century a big chance to reach the same high peak as it did in painting. All conditions were fulfilled. The outspoken materialist view of life of the merchants, the business-like way of thinking, also in their private life, predestined this matter-of-fact people for the inauguration of a functionalist style, as Spinoza would later use in his philosophical works, and Rembrandt in his paintings, especially in his composition. Moreover, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, Holland had a great functionalist, the mathematician and engineer Simon Stevin, who in his books and in his teaching gave all necessary directions for the creation of a new typically Dutch style of architecture. But the whole movement fizzled out before it really started. The merchants with their bad manners which always go together with bad taste, missed the European bus, thanks to their parvenu ostentation. It was of paramount importance for them to show the world how immensely rich they were, and so a functional style would be the least suitable to their purposes. They opined in those days, that architecture and furniture became art only if they were decorated, and the most splendid decorations were, in the seventeenth century, those of Italy and France.

So Holland did not play any part whatsoever in architecture. Only few churches were built, after the Calvinists in the years of 1570 till 1600, had taken possession of the old catholic churches. The new churches, for instance, the Zuyder Kerk (1603-1611) and the Wester Kerk (1620-1631), both in Amsterdam, and built by Hendrik de Keyser, had still the basilica style (sanctuary, nave and aisles) which was the best for the Catholic liturgy, but impossible for the Calvinist religious services. The only serious attempt to bring the Calvinist churches in accordance with their new function, was the central Church of Willem-

stad (1596-1607), but then built under the influence of Simon Stevin. However, this new type of church was only seldom applied in the later years of the seventeenth century.

The public buildings in Holland met the same fate as the residences of burghers in the towns. Very often the official buildings dating from the fifteenth century and earlier, remained as they were with the exception of the facades which were pulled down and replaced by seventeenth century facades. This occurred with the townhall in Leyden (c.1600), the townhall in Harlem, and the flesher's hall (1603) in the same town, all three patch works of the Fleming Lieven de Key (c.1560-1627). Or a complete new building was erected on a groundplan of the fifteenth century, with a secondhand facade of the seventeenth. One needs not be an architect to realize the incongruity of this kind of bungling. A house is a space creation for a definite purpose in a definite time, and the exterior must be the logical and necessary consequence from the interior. Piecing together an interior and an exterior of different periods is bad taste.

As for the "great" representative creations in Holland, the town hall in Amsterdam (1648) by Jacob van Campen (d.1656), a plump and fat abomination in Palladio style, with not the least attempt to adapt it to its environment, is unhollandish, but it impressed the merchants of the seventeenth century, and even Constantine Huygens, who called it "the eighth world wonder," probably because he measured its monumentality after the tons of building material used for the construction. Unhollandish is the Mauritshuis (c.1664) by Pieter Post (1608-1669) and Jacob van Campen, with its Michelangelo style, unhollandish the Huis ten Bosch (1645) in the Hague. They are all provincial copies of grand originals in foreign countries. The architecture of the seventeenth century in Holland is just as insignificant as the sculpture.

Music. The general conditions in Holland during the whole of the seventeenth century were especially impropitious for composers and musicians. The absolutist countries of Western Europe, with their lust for infinite motion and splendor, met the court-composers half-way. The musicians and composers in Holland, on the contrary, could not possibly find any inspiration for great musical forms in the spirit of realism prevailing in the

Republic. It is true, they made their music as much as possible descriptive in accordance with the text, but not for the sake of realism, but only to show their virtuosity in playfully picturing in the notation unessential details of the text. The court-composers of the second part of the sixteenth century, even Perluigi da Palestrina (1525-1591) had already set the pace for these unserious trickeries. Music is no imitative art.

Another handicap was the fact that there was no court in Holland as there was everywhere in Western Europe. Every court had at least one court-composer and at least a chamber orchestra, if not a full-fledged opera with singers and a corps-de-ballet, as could be found even in the miniature states of Germany. To make things worse, the Calvinists in Holland were so hostile to music, that they even tried to silence the organs in their churches. In many places they would have destroyed them, had not the Government intervened. Music, and still more dancing, were in the eyes of the Calvinists diabolic inventions. A man was allowed to dance but only with his legitimate wife, and when nobody was present to see the dancing. The musicians, therefore, had to play in an adjacent room or behind a curtain. After the Synod of Dordrecht, the city council invited the reverend participants from all countries of Europe to a testimonial banquet. A banquet without music would have been unthinkable, so they engaged a number of vocalists and instrumentalists, but the female singers were obliged to sing their sacred melodies behind a curtain, in order not to scandalize the holy men. Catholicism could not be of any help for the revival of music in Holland. The Catholics had no freedom of religion, they had their secret conventicles in private houses or in warehouses. The liturgy and the music, thus, were condemned to the greatest simplicity and austerity.

The only possibility for the young generation of prospective composers and musicians, to learn their profession was an apprenticeship with one or another organist or with a "stadsmuzikant," a trumpeter or oboist in the service of the town.

For all that, the Dutch people loved music. The painting of this century has proved it thousandfold. In the houses of the burghers they sang and played harpsichord, clavichord, violin, viola da gamba, lute, theorbo, guitar, flute, etc. And in the taverns, even

in the pothouses in the villages, hardly ever did a fiddler fail or a cittern player. The country people liked good food, plenty of food, and a lot of beer and brandy, but their joy of life was only complete when the walls resounded with their jarring raucous songs accompanied by one or two instruments.

In the seventeenth century, Holland had only one composer who really deserved this name. It was Jan Pietersz. Sweelinck (1562-1621).¹⁵² He was born in Deventer, got his first training-ship from his father who was an organist in Deventer, later at the Old Church at Amsterdam; after his death in 1573, the young Sweelinck continued his apprenticeship with Jan Willemsz. Lossy who was an organist at Harlem and at the same time a shawm player (an instrument of the oboe class) in the service of the town. In 1581 Sweelinck got the job of organist at the Old Church of Amsterdam which his father formerly had. He was never in Italy. But the manual he used for himself and his pupils was *Instituzioni harmoniche* (1558) by Zarlino. Sweelinck composed his music in an Italian or French style.

All the other composers of the seventeenth century were dilettantes by the grace of God. The most gifted were Cornelis Schuyt (1557-1616), Cornelis Thymans Padbrué (d. about 1631), Johan Albert Ban (1597/8-1644), and Constantine Huygens, the secretary of Prince Frederic Henry of Orange. Huygens was a bel-esprit, a very prolific author, he mastered five musical instruments, and composed according to his letter of January 1687 to J. Duarte: "more than 800 works." He thought highly of himself and boasted on another occasion: "Il n'y a pas que moy en ces Provinces qui se mesle de ce beau mestier jusques à la composition.—C'est un roy borgne qui vous parle au pais des aveugles" (I am the only one in these provinces who in the beautiful field of music has ventured himself in compositions. Among the blind the one-eyed blinkard reigns and that is I who speak to you).

FORMALIST PAINTING AND LITERATURE

In the light of this survey of the arts in general, it will be evident that, because of the prevailing conditions in the seventeenth century in Holland, only playwrights of popular comedies

and painters had big chances. They were able to play the game of the Hollanders with their worship of matter and their passionate love of reality.

This chapter will deviate from the general usage of separating the arts into different chapters or sections, and deal with literature and painting combined. I do so, in the first place, because I firmly believe in the unity of all arts. The different genres have, in my opinion, come into existence through the division of labor and the nonessential differentiation of the media (stone, wood, color, space, sounds, words, etc.) used for the communication of the artists' experience. Apart from this general reason, there is a special reason for not separating literature and painting of the Dutch seventeenth century. The literature of this century is particularly suitable to teach us how to approach the paintings, and the paintings in their turn are so very explicative of the substance and the Gestalt of the literature. Painting and literature interintegrate each other, as they are both depictions of the one and the same concrete world, although each does its job in its own way. An instance will elucidate the interintegration of Dutch painting and literature. When a court painter represents, let me say, a group of goddesses or nymphs, they will all have the same type, the same proportions, the same anatomy, the same complexion, the same face, the same hair-do, etc. They will look like sisters. A court painter is not interested in the reality, the individuality. When a Dutch realist paints a bunch of peasants, he must individualize them, because in reality "a" peasant does not exist. In life there exists only "this" peasant and "that" peasant. A realist poet cannot individualize country people in the same way as the painter does by a detailed description of their faces and bodies, therefore he individualizes them, for instance, by mentioning their names. A realist painter cannot leave out of consideration the cut and the color of the clothes of each of his figures. A single glance at such a picture will suffice to give us a complete representation of the whole group. If a poet should try the same method, his description had to be so detailed that the only result would be confusion. Therefore he will confine himself, for instance, to a few characteristic colors: a boorish green, a green greener than the greenest grass, or a hell-of-a-red, which colors will be sug-

gestive of the other shades. He might describe a *few* typical details, for instance, the nonchalance with which one of his characters has flopped his hat on his head, to create the necessary atmosphere of the whole. So each medium has its possibilities and its limitations. A painter can paint the existential simultaneity of a person and his milieu. A poet is bound to make out of the simultaneity a succession, he will first describe the man and then his world, or *vice versa*. He can never represent the man-in-his-world.

A third reason for a combined treatment of literature and painting is the coincidence that the greatest realist play-wright of the Dutch seventeenth century, a man with the name of Gerbrand Adriaensz. Bredero (1585-1618) was a painter himself who changed his job, probably because the medium of the theatre was more adequate to his realist aspirations than just forms, lines, and colors could ever be.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century there were in Holland two art schools. The older school was already in the thirteenth century naturalist and later on turned realist. The younger school changed in the sixteenth century from naturalism to formalism.

What is formalism?

Art creation is always a process of transformation. The raw material of the future work of art had already a form before the process of creation started, but, of course, only a vulgar, not an artistic form. The artist experiencing, or, what is the same, living the raw material, the reality, the plot, the story, transcends it, he makes it to *his* object, by changing the vulgar form to *his* form, which might be better called, Gestalt. The Gestalt is, thus, the old form *plus* the individual experience of the painter or the poet. Gestalt is, thus, the transformed or transcended old form. This transcendence of the form is coexistent with the transcendence of the raw material into a substance. The two transcendences are, in fact, only one transcendence because Gestalt can only be the Gestalt of a definite substance, as substance can only be a gestalted substance. The Gestalt and the substance of a work of art constitute, consequently, an inseparable unity. Every attempt to separate them mentally cannot but result in a reconversion of the Gestalt into a vulgar form,

and the simultaneous reduction of the substance to the raw material that it originally was. The work of *art* is then no longer there. The great art form is thus *lived*, it originates from within, it is necessary, and it is induplicable.

The form of formalist art, on the contrary, is not lived, but *acquired*, it originates not from within, but is brought in from without. It has been taken over from a work of art by one or another supposedly great predecessor, and then formalism will mostly be decried as mannerism. Or the form has been prescribed or dictated by a famous art school or academy, and then the formalist work will be disqualified as academic. The form of formalist art is, thus, always something secondhand, something prefabricated. If we wonder what persuaded the artist to prefer acquired, conventional forms over lived forms, we shall mostly discover that the gratuitous and erroneous assumption, that *all* art must be a realization of beauty, and that the purpose of *all* art is to evoke an aesthetic pleasure in the mind of the recipient, has led the formalists astray. If ever possible, he will start his creation by selecting a content which is already beautiful in itself, and if he should choose a not beautiful subject matter, then he will try to make at least the form, in which he presents it to us, as well-ordered, as balanced, as harmonious, as elegant, as graceful, in a word, as beautiful as possible.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century the formalists were in the majority in the North-Netherlands. There were four centers:

Amsterdam with Pieter Lastman (1583-1633), the teacher of Rembrandt in 1631; Jan Pynas (1583-1631); Jacob Pynas (about 1590-after 1639), the teacher of Rembrandt in 1631, but only for a few months; Nicolaes Moyaert (1592/1593-1655); and Leonaert Braemer (1596-1674);

Harlem with Karel van Mander (1548-1606); Hendrik Goltzius (1558-1617); and Cornelis Cornelisz. van Haerlem (1562-1636);

Leyden with Jacob Isaacs van Swanenburgh, teacher of Rembrandt from 1620-1623;

Utrecht with Abraham Bloemaert (1564-1651); Gerard van Honthorst (1590-1654).

The end of the school of Leyden may be dated from 1624, when Rembrandt, together with Jan Lievens (1607-1674) opened there an atelier.

The center of formalism in Harlem fell apart about 1630, because it could no longer compete with the realism of Frans Hals (1581?-1666).

The center of Amsterdam met the same fate, as soon as Rembrandt settled in the capital in 1631.

The school of the Catholic and prelatie Utrecht was the only center that continued holding its ground throughout the seventeenth century. It provided the Catholics of all the Northern Provinces with the religious art they needed for their liturgy and their private devotion.

We see from this survey that from 1630 till 1670, the formalists had no great chances in Holland *proper*: the provinces North-Holland or West-Friesland, South-Holland, and Zeeland. This alone seems to prove that formalism was not the expression of Dutch life of those days, that formalism was no real Dutch art. Utrecht was besides a provincial town outside Holland. There were some manufactories, but it was never a commercial center of any importance. Formalism was an outlandish, an unhollandish style.

Formalism was imported in the sixteenth century, in the first place, from Italy, and later a secondhand formalism found its way into Holland from the South-Netherlands, France, Germany, and Spain. A great number of sixteenth century painters in Holland were so dazzled by the staggering technique of the great Italian masters, especially in the domains of proportion, anatomy, perspective, and composition, that they went to the south to learn there the finesses of their art at the very source. They forsook their original and unprejudiced, spontaneous, naive way of depicting the reality and began to create in the Italian style. They lost their innate Netherlandish self, that is to say, they gave themselves a hell of trouble to lose it, of course, without success. A Hollander always remains a Hollander, even when he does no longer want to be a Hollander. At the utmost he attains a droll amphibiousness, he will be an Italian Hollander, a French Hollander, in the style of Bredero who caricatured a "*Spaansche Brabander*."

I have dwelt so long upon the Dutch formalists, although I am not directly concerned with them, because I need them as non-realists for a fond against which to set off the Dutch realist painters. But before I come to the latter, I have to add a few words on the formalist literature of the seventeenth century.

The poet whom the Hollanders grossly overestimate as their poet laureate is Joost van den Vondel (1587-1679). He descended from a petty bourgeois family who was obliged to emigrate from Antwerp to Cologne because of their anabaptist affiliations. After a sojourn in Frankfurt, Bremen and Utrecht, they landed in Amsterdam where Joost's father opened a hosiery shop in the Warmoesstraat. After his death the young poet stood behind the counter, sold stockings, and wrote tragedies. Already in an early age Joost tried to scramble up and to reach a higher social level. His first tragedy, a monstrosity with the title *Het Pascha* (1612), written in *Dutch*, was dedicated in *French* to the *Dutchman*: "à mon-seigneur Jean Michiels van Vaerlaer mon singulier ami." The man was very rich, he had bought, for instance, the castle and the manor of Jaersveld and ter Horst (near Vianen) from Prince Philip William of Orange. The two sisters of Joost married money aristocrats, and over his brothers-in-law Joost got acquainted with the burgomaster of Amsterdam Cornelis Pietersz. Hooft, to whom he dedicated in 1620 his tragedy *Hierusalem verwoest*. Henceforth the circle of his rich friends extended farther and farther. Among them were Laurens Joost Baeck, who had earned his considerable fortune with speculations in sugar, and Laurens Reael who, as Governor General of the East-Indies, had played a leading part in the East-India Company. Vondel began to speculate in sugar himself, and in 1637 he had already a bank account of 42,000 guilders, which he had certainly not earned with his poetry. Vondel was during the whole of his life the adulator of the Amsterdam regents. Even the friends of Vondel were shocked by the glorification of the burgomasters whom the whole population knew to be a disgrace to the Republic, as, for instance, the Bickers, Geelvinck, the Oetgens van Waveren, Volckert Overlander, Michiel Pauw van Achttienhoven, etc.

In 1641, Vondel converted to Catholicism. There might have been many motives for this step: his feminine nature, his need of

an infallible authority in matters of faith, his occasional melancholy, the influence of his catholic friend C. G. Plemp, perhaps also his amorous inclinations to the pretty Catholic widow Tesselschade. The greatest attraction for a man with such intense aristocratic ambition, such outspoken lust for grandeur and splendor was the seventeenth century "Heerlyckheit der Kercke" (the glory of the Church), which was the title of one of the first great poems written after his conversion. The Catholic churches were in the absolutist period no longer dark temples, but rather magnificent operahouses with thrones and stairs, balconies and boxes, and an abundance of white and gold. The light of the day was no longer dimmed by stained windows in order to envelop the religious services in a mystic dark, but now the sun splashed through high windows into the interior from all sides. On the altars there were no longer statues of saints emaciated for fasting and praying, but mundane Rubens figures, Holy Maries, Holy Catharines, and Holy Magdalenes with voluptuous breasts which almost burst the gold brocade of their bodices. With indescribable elegance they tucked up their silk skirts to show, of course, ad majorem Dei gloriam, the luxurious plastic of a naked knee. And under the ceilings with clouds full of rosy cherubs, no longer hovered the holy melismata of the Gregorian chant but Italian "baroque" music jubilating with timpani and trumpets the glory of the heavenly King and Queen enthroned under the baldachino of the altars.

What shall I say about the art of Holland's poet laureate? Let us listen to the characterization of Vondel's poetry by himself. He calls himself an epigenous of the French school of Marot, Montaigne, Du Bellay, Des Portes, and Garnier. He swore by the French aestheticians Du Bartas and Ronsard. He confessed flatly that he composed his poetry not for the common man in Holland but only for the elite. In *Aenleidinghe der Nederduitsche Dichtkunste* he wrote: "The laurel will not be bestowed on the poet by "den gemeenen hoop" (the vulgar bunch), but by those who with knowledge and without hesitation award the crown and are able to discern between the chattering of magpies and the song of swans." . . . "Only when brothel jabber, and proverbs, and dirt of whores and gangsters will be banned [this was, of course, a sly dig at Bredero] will the Theatre procure an

honorable entertainment and be accessible to 'deftige lieden' (people of rank and swelldom)." Vondel wanted to be "hoog-dravend" (high-stepping, high-flowing, high-blowing). In the preface of his tragedy *Gysbrecht van Aemstel* he dedicates this work to His Excellence, Hugo de Groot, because he was aware that the great jurist had no aversion from the "tragedy style, which is the highest stepping of all the other literary forms." In his "Danckoffer aen de Magistraet van Amsterdam na het spelen van de *Gebroeders in den Schouwburghe*" Vondel snorts: "The Amsterdam Theatre resounding from its verses, and stepping on its cothurns prouder and prouder, has now already outshined the royal theatres [of the absolutist countries] through its nobler grace." In the dedication of *Publius Virgilius Maroos Wercken* to Constantine Huygens, he explains that beauty consists of "the evenness of all parts and their colors, and of gracefulness and sparkling, and flowering, and becoming movements."

"The poet must have the cadence of the heavens and the language of the gods," he assures us in *Aenleidinghe der Nederduitsche Dichtkunste*. In the dedication of his *Lucifer* to the Emperor Ferdinand III, he excuses himself: "What may be lacking as for the required swollenness of the language, will be compensated by the plot, the title, the name, and the illustriousness of the hero." He calls his style "the stage trumpet of our Netherlandish goddess of songs." In *Berecht aen alle Kunstgenooten*, we read: "The stage and the personages are such and so glorious that they require a more glorious style, and higher cothurns than I am able to put on my feet." In the dedication of *Ondergang van Troje* to Peter Hooft de Graaf, we read: "Montaigne says that the good, best, and divine poetry steps higher than the rules required." In "Berecht" of *Salomoneus* he recommends the use of "dignified examples." In *Tobias Morsten* he assures that his "verses are highstepping on the trumpet" of Morsten's brother. In "Berecht" of his tragedy *Jephta*, we find in the lines that he uses verses of ten or eleven syllables, because "the noble man Ronsard, the prince of the French poets, considers this metrum higher-stepping."

I could continue, but it seems to me that these quotations will suffice to convince the reader that Vondel with his formalist

style is just the opposite of the Dutch realism of the seventeenth century and that it is not worth while reading him.

Vondel's attitude toward the great realist painting of his century was perfectly in line with his puffed up poetry. He did not like the realists, not even Rembrandt. He mentioned him two times, but only because he was interested in the ana-baptist minister Gerard Anslo and the burgomaster of Amsterdam Jan Six, whose portraits Rembrandt painted. Vondel found that Anslo's portrait was a failure: you must hear the man; see him, is not enough. And the portrait of Jan Six did not please him at all. Vondel scoffed: "And so does one [he did not even mention Rembrandt's name] paint Six in the blossom of his youth?" But Govert Flinck (1615-1660) was his man. He calls him the "Apelles of the town Cleve, who had reached this height through the brilliance of his mind." He praises his "immortal genius," his "crowned brush." "In Flinck manifests itself the great life of Veronese with force and majesty," and also the formalist Lastman (1583-1633) was one of his favorites. "Lastman was the Apelles of our century," who could be compared only with Rubens (1577-1640). The formalist sculptor Quellinus (1609-1668) got the name of "Fidias." What displeased Vondel in Rembrandt, was the chiaroscuro of the painter. In a jingle on a picture of Filips de Koning (1619-1688), Vondel made an innuendo at Rembrandt: "And so the art of painting engenders also children of darkness, who have to live in obscurity, like an owl." Vondel extolled further formalists as Goltzius (1558-1617), Jan Pynas (1583-1631), Hendrik Bloemaert (1601-1672), Ferdinand Bol (1616-1680), and even the Rubens' pupils of no account, as Wybrant de Geest and Abraham van Diepenbeeck.

Second to Vondel was the poet Pieter Cornelisz. Hooft (1581-1647). He was an aristocrat born. His father was burgomaster of Amsterdam, who bestowed upon Pieter the lordly position of High Bailiff of Muyden. From the pinnacles of the castle of Muyden, P. C. Hooft looked down upon the lower society classes, and even upon Vondel who was always, in the eyes of Hooft, the man of the hosiery shop. Vondel scraped and bowed before the High Bailiff, and incensed him in adulatory poems, but never succeeded to be admitted to the utterly refined and sophisticated "Muyderkring." Only one time Vondel made there his appearance,

and then without being personally invited. The first time was the last time. But all the swelldom of Hooft and his continuous masquerading and parading in his literary works in togas of Tacitus, Cicero, or Vergil, he never managed to kill in him his Hollandish nature. Unexpectedly the stilted poet could break out in a simple ditty as *Als Jan Sybrech zou believen*, or write a farce as *Warenar*, or a jeer at the dominés in his *Schynheiligh*. Later he was obviously ashamed of his literary escapades and his acting out of character, because he published the *Warenar* anonymously and kept *Schynheiligh* in a drawer of his desk.

REALIST PAINTING AND LITERATURE

W. Martin¹⁵³ in his excellent manual of seventeenth century painting in Holland, reports a lot of historical facts which are significant for the understanding of realism when we see them in their interrelation. So, for instance, he states that the members of the realist school, with only a few exceptions, were persons of low birth. We may conclude from this fact that the realist painters, as a rule, had enjoyed only an elementary school education, because higher education was then and there reserved exclusively for the more privileged children of God. It is true, Rembrandt (1606-1669) and Jan Steen (1626-1679) were matriculated at the University of Leyden, but that does not disprove what I just said about the cultural level of the realists at large. We know for sure that Jan Steen imparted a false appearance to his enrollment. He just wanted to be exempt from military service and to enjoy freedom from excise. The Rembrandt experts have not yet succeeded to find out whether Rembrandt was driven to the University for thirst of knowledge or for thirst of beer and brandy. The second supposition seems to be more probable than the first.

Higher education had its advantages but at the same time its disadvantages. For prospective formalists a Latin school was a prerequisite. A formalist was interested in the theatricality and the decorative phantasies of the Greek and Roman mythology. What he especially needed was knowledge of foreign languages for his voyages through Italy and France, and for his study of the different treatises on painting by Lorenzo Ghiberti (1378-

1455), Leone Battista Alberti (1404?-1472), Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528).¹⁵⁴

The prospective realist painter, on the other hand, could do without all this learnedness which would have meant for him only a waste of time and of money. The greatest asset of his primitive school building was that he would not be so easily tempted to sell his precious Dutch heritage for a mess of Italian pottage. So he knew nothing but Dutch life, the Dutch language, the Dutch landscapes, the Dutch sea, the Dutch skies, the Dutch towns, the Dutch churches and houses, taverns and brothels, in short, Holland with no flaw or speck.

Martin¹⁵⁵ has likewise researched the religion of the Dutch painters and found out that only four of the hundreds and hundreds of them were Roman Catholics: Jan Anthonisz. Ravesteyn (about 1572-1657), Jan van Goyen (1596-1656), Thomas de Keyser (1596/1597-1667), and Jan Steen (1626-1679). The other catholics mentioned in Martin's list belonged either to the school of Utrecht, or to the period of the academicians who, after the death of Rembrandt superseded the few remaining realists.

The realists, thus, were as a rule Protestants, in other words, sons or grandsons of the Gueux, who as Anabaptists and Calvinists were much closer to the Dutch reality than the Catholics and Lutherans, who during the second half of the sixteenth century, sided with Spain and fought for Philip II, in their opinion, the legitimate sovereign of Holland. The Anabaptists and the Calvinists were the very insurgents. Freedom ran in their blood so imperiously that even an exhortation to an orderly life, to the practice of civic virtues, and, as far as their art was concerned, to academic rules and laws, were felt as an infraction of their precious liberty. They were altogether a queer sort of men. They liked a joyous life, lived from hand to mouth, spent more time in the pothouse than in the church, and love was for them just an allround game. Carel van Mander (1548-1608) of Harlem, who was a poet and a painter at the same time, typifies his colleagues in his *Schilderboeck* (1606)¹⁵⁶—incidentally, the first Dutch history of art!—by the slogan: "Hoe schilder hoe wilder" (the painter the quainter). Read what Bredero (1585-1618), likewise a painter and poet, writes about himself in his comedy *Jerolimo de Spaansche Brabander*, in which he imperson-

ates himself in the part of Otje Dickmuyl. Read the melodrama of Frans Hals (1581?-1666), especially the last act of his marriage with Anneke Harmensd. On February 20, 1616, Hals was summoned before the court because he had "loved" his wife a little bit too hard-handedly. He got off cheaply after having promised to change for the better and to swear off brandy and fornication. A few days after the reconciliation, Anneke died! On February 12, 1617, he married Lysbeth Reiniers of Harlem, who nine days (not nine months) later presented him with a nuptial blessing. Read the spectacle varié of Rembrandt's escapades, especially his love affair with Geertge Dirckx (the widow of a trumpeter), who, in 1642, became the governess of his son Titus and ended in an asylum. Read what the Dutch poet Matthys vander Merwede van Clootwijet writes about the Dutch painters, with whom he was together in Rome. They are with a few exceptions, "optreckers" (debauchers) "who love the bottle still more than the maid." His book "Uyt-heemsen oorlog ofte Roomsche Mintriomfen . . . voorgevallen en beschreven in 't jaer 1647, '48, '49 en '50" is according to G. Kalff: "the most brutal sexuality ever depicted in the literature."¹⁵⁷

Small wonder that most of the realists were continuously up to the hilt in debt and died in utter poverty.

In 1652, the baker Jan Yken seized the furniture and the pictures of Frans Hals (1581?-1666) because he could not pay his debts nor refund the 200 Carolus guilders which he had borrowed from the baker. From 1664 on Hals lived on relief. In 1666, he died. The funeral expenses (inclusive of coffin and grave) amounted to four guilders.

Hercules Seghers (about 1590-1645) drank himself to death "for misery." He left nothing behind but unsold pictures and a collection of I.O.U.'s.

Jan van Goyen (1596-1656) fell into debt and died poor.

Thomas de Keyser (1596/1597-1667) ran a basalt business from 1640 till 1642. He had chucked painting.

Aernoud van der Neer (1603-1677) died as a pauper.

Rembrandt (1606-1669) was, after his bankruptcy in 1656, an employee in the shop of Hendrickje Stoffels, his former maid-servant, later his mistress. She earned the living for Rembrandt, his son Titus by Saskia, and his daughter Cornelia by Hendrickje.

When he died, in 1669, he left nothing but his poor rags and his tools. The funeral cost fifteen guilders.

Abraham van Beyeren (1620/1621-1690) died poor.

Jan Wijnants (1625?-1684) earned his living in a gin-shop, and died in poverty.

Paulus Potter (1625-1654) succumbed to tuberculosis and hunger. Two years before he had lost his father, the painter Pieter Potter, who ended his life in the greatest poverty.

Jan Steen (1626-1679) died as an inn-keeper. For his pictures he never got more than ten, at the utmost twenty guilders a piece.

Jacon van Ruysdael (1629?-1682) was starving in solitude and died in a home for the poor. There was no money for a burial.

Pieter de Hooch (1629-after 1684) was the son of a mason. At the age of twenty-four he was the housepainter and the house-servant of the draper Justus de la Grange.

Jan Vermeer (1632-1675) of Delft, had eleven children. On the day of his death, the debt with the baker's alone, amounted to 617 guilders.

Adriaen van de Velde (1636-1672) could not subsist on painting. His wife opened a little hosiery shop.

Jan van der Heyden (1637-1712) was a painter and a mechanician. Not for wealth.

Meindert Hobbema (1638-1709) was a wine and oil-gauge. His corpse was taken to the grave in a department wagon.

This list of honor contains the names of Holland's greatest painters. Of course, it does not mean that all of them have brought on themselves their poverty, their rags, and their penury at the end of their lives. They were for the larger part the victims of the Dutch "deftigheid" (parvenu prominence) which from the middle of the century on became more and more perspicuous. The merchants had become too "deftig," too "foine" for the plain and vulgar realism of the Dutch school, so they just starved to death those of the old gang, who refused to belie themselves and to go through the new fashion of the French Academy. Busken-Huet¹⁵⁸ has called the little world of the Dutch realists of the seventeenth century "a world of social vagabonds." What kind of art could we expect from them, but the works that now fill the museums of the whole world.

Up to now I have dealt only with their descent, their social position, and their religion. Let us now have a look at the subjects in which they were especially interested.

PORTRAITS

Dutch portraits of the seventeenth century may be divided into two categories: single portraits and group portraits. Single portraits were mainly destined for home use; the spectators were the relatives and the friends of the portrayed. The group portraits were ordered for public or semi-public buildings: townhalls, "doelen" (buildings for civic guards), "snykamers" (operating-rooms) guild-halls, and board-rooms of charity institutions, as hospitals, leperhouses, workhouses, homes for old men or women, orphanages, "hofjes" (courts), etc. The spectators of group-portraits were the general public.

The reason for the enormous quantity of single as well as group portraits in Holland during the seventeenth century, was the wealth and the vanity of the Dutch parvenus. The vanity, of course, increased in proportion to the increase of their riches. It manifested itself in the portraits in all possible varieties: from self-sufficiency upwards (or downwards?) to self-complacency, self-admiration, self-conceitedness. The childish pleasure of exhibiting their pictures on the walls of their living-rooms and sniffing up the incense of admiration and veneration of their wives and children, and the children of their children, is quite understandable. At the beginning of the century, in the first days of the East-India Company, the Dutch merchant was still a regular skipper or shopkeeper. With a cap on his head and a pipe in his mouth he was standing all day behind the counter of his boutique, selling pepper or cinnamon for five cents; ten or twenty years later, he lived in a luxurious "heerenhuis" or "dubbel heerenhuis" on one of the fashionable grachts of Amsterdam. He had his equipage with two or four horses, and his liveried servants, and sometimes his private yacht with a carved and gilded bow and silk sails, and his manor in the country with the hereditary title of the former lords and barons, who now sported their gilded poverty at the European courts, or earned their precarious living in the military service of one or another mon-

arch, if not as free entrepreneur at the head of a company or a regiment. In the same way as the former nobility had their galleries of ancestors, so the new money aristocrats wanted a gallery with the portrait of the founder of their grocer dynasty and His Lordship's successful successors.

Parvenus in the animated flesh are certainly not the most enjoyable species of the human race. A big bank account does not per se exclude, but neither does it guarantee high intelligence or depth and width of life. Parvenus in oil (thus portraits of upstarts) are always fatiguing, because the eventual possession of worthwhile human qualities, is usually overshadowed by the pretention, the self-consciousness, and self-righteousness of these bourgeois-gentilhommes. Great numbers of these portraits, as we find them in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, are just exasperating. It is not necessary to mention that this remark does not apply to the immortal portraits of Rembrandt.

The style of the Dutch single portraits, as well as the style of the group portraits, remained unalterably the same. The Amsterdam aristocrats demanded nothing but a "sprekende gelijkenis," a likeness so striking that it was as if in the next moment the man in oil would open his mouth and begin to talk. The realist style was the intentionality of the art patrons and, of course, the intentionality of the portrait painters, who were entirely dependent on the former. In highest esteem were those artists whose realism came closest to photographic exactness and precision. Because of the exigency of a striking resemblance, the only ones who were able to judge whether a portrait was "naer den eisch voltrocken" (had complied with all the requirements of this period), were the relatively small number of contemporaries who personally knew the portrayed. It follows from this that the great mass of Dutch portraits had for the later generations nothing but a historic value, unless we put up an art standard alienated from the standard of the creators of these works. Such arbitrary criteria would, of course, be unfair. So the only elements of the work that come under our jurisdiction, are the accessories of the portraits: the texture of the skin, the eyes, the hair, the hands, the nails, and the texture of the silk, satin, velvet, linen, laces, furs, jewelry, buttons, and the kind. The seventeenth century patrons namely required the

same photographic exactness in rendering these details as they demanded utter likeness. I should like to remind the reader of the characteristics of the "baroque" portrait, in order to realize, that Dutch portraits have nothing whatsoever to do with "baroque."

Rembrandt, after he had changed his portrait style about 1635, did no longer care for what in his estimation, was accessories. The character, the life of his models was for him paramount to such a degree, that, in his opinion, the finicky elaboration of the precious emballage in which the Dutch parvenus had wrapped up their insignificance, would distract the spectator from what Rembrandt considered to be essential: the psychophysical totalness of the human being. The singular attitude of Rembrandt to portrait painting was one of the main reasons of his total oblivion in the later years of his life. What did a merchant care for a "soulpainter," as Houbraken had characterized him?¹⁵⁹ Not what they were, but what they had, counted.

The group portraits gave rise to another art problem, that had not to be solved in the single portraits because of their utter simplicity. The new problem was that of the composition. The early group portraits, those of the first half of the sixteenth century, show an arrangement of the groups in two rows. Many times it looked as if the artist had carefully partitioned the available surface of the canvas into rectangles so that each member of the group got the same number of square inches in accordance with the equal contribution to be paid for his immortalization. It is questionable whether this stamp-album arrangement deserves the qualification of composition. In the second half of the sixteenth century the painters began to vary the old arrangement. In a group portrait by Cornelis Teunissen, dating from 1557, the first drinking glass turned up; in another by Dirck Baerentsz, in 1564, we discover a can of pewter on the table, while two guards hold a herring and a third a glass. Besides, the two rows are no longer as straight as they formerly used to be. A group by Cornelis Ketel, of 1588, displays for the first time weapons and a standard.

In the paintings of Frans Hals, the geometrical monotony has completely disappeared. The scenes have at first sight the air of an incidental occurrence. But on closer inspection we soon find

out how cleverly Hals had planned the group in order to give each single figure a chance to show himself to his greatest advantage. In addition to this, Frans Hals tried to bind the figures of his groups together in the unity of an action in which all participate. This action is mostly banqueting. For all that, it is never a realistic, on the contrary, it is always a make-believe wining and dining. For instance, the men are assembled not in a real banquet hall but on an expressly constructed stage, thus a space with only three walls. The fourth wall had to be left out in order to afford the spectator a good look at the toppers. To put it short, Hals' civic guards are not living but acting a drinking party.

The theatricality of Frans Hals is most conspicuous when we compare his "schuttersstukken" with Rembrandt's so-called *Nightwatch*. Banningh and his company are likewise united in one action: the marching out of the company. But it is not a stage, it is a street with the Kloveniersdoelen with the open doors in the background. Besides Rembrandt had not measured out the available space to satisfy each contributor in accordance to his contribution. What did Rembrandt care for their contentment? The *Nightwatch* was for him a work of art and not a commodity. Therefore, he even dared to indifferently differentiate the whole company into a "fond," a field of vision, on behalf of the one man whom he had selected to be the "figure" on this "fond." We shall later analyze the reasons for the sarcastic monumentalization of the parvenu, Captain Banningh Cocq. For the moment we are especially interested in Rembrandt's technique of "indifferentiation" in contrast to the style of Frans Hals. Rembrandt carried through his "indifferentiation" in the following way. In the first place the by-figures of the *Nightwatch*, who constituted the "fond" that had to bring out Banningh in full relief, look in proportion to their distance from the central figure as if they are unfinished. The details of the uniforms, and even the outlines of their heads are vague, often blunt, and sketchy; and likewise the color brilliance of the central figure passes gradually into darker shades for the same purpose.

In the group portraits of Frans Hals every detail is, as far as the elaboration is concerned, equivalent to all the other details. A fond, a blurred field of vision, comes into existence only by

focusing *our* attention (stare) on one or another head, or on a part of a uniform. Rembrandt forces us, through his indifferen-
tiation of everything but the dominating central figure, to keep
our attention fixed on Banningh alone. The reasons for this
technique will be explicated later. Frans Hals was, in this
respect, more realist than Rembrandt. In reality there is no
“figure” and no “fond.” The figure and the fond of reality is
entirely the work of the spectator. Every detail of reality can
thus be figured and every detail can be found, entirely dependent
on the arbitrary fixation of our stare. Frans Hals was, thus,
more realist, Rembrandt more impressionist. The latter saw the
reality à travers son tempérament and, therefore he depicted the
reality not as it was, or as a lens would see it, but as he, Rem-
brandt, saw it, and as he required that the spectator should
see it. The *Syndics* (1662) has been painted in a technique quite
different from the technique of the *Nightwatch*: the five guild-
masters are five differentiated and equivalent figures, whereas
only the wall of the assembly room—inclusive of the concierge
leaning against the wall, and quasi constituting a part of the
wall, thus transcended from man to a thing—was indiffer-
entiated, in other words, reduced to a fond. The reduction of the
concierge to a non-entity was the reflex of the social distance
between the seignorial syndics and their employee. A distance
seen from the arrogant perspective of the guildmasters, but
not from the perspective of the democratic Rembrandt.

The most typical group portraits of the seventeenth century
in Holland are the “schuttersstukken,” the portraits of civic
guards. In the sixteenth century the civic guards were sections
of burghers with military training for the defense of the town
in times of war, and for the maintenance of order within the
town walls in times of tumult, mutiny, riot, or insurrection.
During the first half of the Eighty Years’ War (1568-1648), the
civic guards were veritable warriors. From the Twelve Years’
Truce (1609-1621) on, when fighting against Spain was so good
as over, they were not much more than a decorative element in
the civic life of the burghers. They remained in possession of
their “schuttersdoelen” (buildings), in the first place, for meet-
ings where there was mostly more drinking and clinking than
thinking, and then for banquets where they enjoyed their

life in a real "varkensvreugde" (swinish way). The national holidays, the receptions of royal visitors (Maria de' Medicis, in 1638; Mary of England, in 1644; Charles II of England, etc.), the installation of burgomasters, and all other local festivities, used to be added lustre to by the civic guards, who were the most colorful and the noisiest "pièce de résistance" in the parades.

The sense and the spirit of the civic guards' group portraits, especially those by Frans Hals and Bartholomeus van der Helst (1613?-1670), can be best understood when we compare them with the portraits in words, composed by the standard-bearer of an Amsterdam company, Bredero. We not only *see* the "heros," but we even enjoy the penetrant smell of beer and brandy which emanates from them, and without which they would not be "schutters."¹⁶⁰

"You, dry old files of Harlem, come on and show what you can. We guys of Amsterdam, bid you defiance to outdo us in drinking. A man who drinks a full jar, how ever swollen his belly is, and afterwards does not reel like an idiot, will never stop drinking.

We have chosen a deft fellow to our *colonel*, who is the right man on the right place, because he drinks stiffly and strongly. He needs only to see beer foaming in the glasses to report for duty, and in a nail test he does not pour a drop on his thumb, because it tastes too well.

The *captain* with his round paunch is likewise a hard toper. He is so good a hand at this business that he empties one jar after another. He can lift a half barrel and sling it forwards and God knows how many jokes he cracks while doing his trick.

The *lieutenant* is no dope either, but then he is a gentleman. He likes to be gay, especially in company with young people. On all kinds of manners he drinks his brimful glasses, even while kissing and cuddling, but he is never too noisy.

Our *standard-bearer* is a habitual drunkard. He drudges with his can for three, four days at a stretch, standing on the same tack. It is hardly believable how doggedly he clings hold of his can. He grasps it with his teeth, and without using hands, he slings it over his head.

You can believe me that it must be man's men who are to be promoted to *sergeants*. The taproom is afraid of them

because they are insatiable. Although they seem to be bad boys with a blue look, they empty the biggest jars and then yell: 'Fill them up, drink them out, lest our chance be lost.'

Our *corporal* is somewhat hot-tempered and besides rather fat for his age. It is amazing how full of pimples his face is, because he never sheds nor shoots. But he does not step aside when it comes to drinking. He swallows gallons and is ready to take one more into the bargain, if someone should lay a wager."

INTERIEURS

The main subject of the Dutch realists of the seventeenth century was man, the next important subject matter was man's world: his indoor and his outdoor world. The artists who specialized in intérieurs are called genre painters.

The criterion for portrait painting was, as we have seen, a "sprekende gelijkenis" (striking likeness), the same criterion was applied to the intérieur: it had to be absolute true to nature, in our case, to the Dutch reality. The genre painters most highly thought of were those who were able to draw from nature with a minute, almost photographic, precision and to paint, let me say, silk so that it no longer *looked like* silk, but *was* silk. In addition to this, there was a third special requisite. A milieu can only be the milieu of a definite person or definite persons. Without man a milieu is a dead thing, an empty frame. A frame gets its sense from the thing framed in. The milieu had to be alive. The function of the milieu must be visualized. So the genre painters were obliged to add to the milieu the persons for whom the milieu was there, the men and women who by living in the milieu, lived the milieu. Man alone is the sense of the setting and the sense of all the properties of the setting.

It is evident that the figures of the Dutch genre pictures could not be idealizations of human beings, as the court painters in the other European countries liked to color-dream them to their heroic idyllic, or bucolic landscapes. Imaginary, thus unrealist, figures would establish too hard a contrast to the realism of the realist surrounding. The figures of the genre pictures, thus, had to be real persons, individuals with their own names, their own faces, and their own characters. But, therefore, we are not yet justified to conceive of these figures as portraits with

an elaborate surrounding. A portrait is ordered by the man who wanted to be portrayed. Genre figures were not ordered, but selected exclusively by the painter. Another evidence for the genre pictures not being portraits, but just indispensable integrations to an interesting space, may be gathered from the fact that the figures usually occupy only a small part of the canvas in proportion to the space reserved for the setting and the obligatory equipment. If they were portraits, they would take up the whole canvas.

How did the genre painters solve the problem of composition? There were three styles of composition in the seventeenth century:

- 1) the *natural* composition, used most conspicuously in the Dutch landscapes,

- 2) the *decorative* composition of the court painters, with which I have dealt on p. ,

- 3) the *functional* composition of Rembrandt, which will occupy us later.

The natural composition, thus, is an arrangement of the constituent parts of a picture not by the painter but by nature itself. The *View on Harlem* of the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin, by Jacob van Ruysdael (1629?-1682); the *Laantje van Middelharnis* of the Museum in Kassel, by Meindert Hobbema (1638-1709), are typical examples of natural composition, which the painters took over from reality with no essential changes.

The natural composition is a negative composition, properly speaking, it is no composition. We may call it a composition only in so far as the painter has deliberately chosen his station point and fixed the limits of the image. The place of the figures in the intérieurs was determined by the milieu. A typical example is *The Linen Closet* by Pieter de Hooch (1629-1677). The main objective of the painter was not the figures (the lady of the house and the girl who assists her in her domestic duties), but the typical seventeenth century Dutch milieu. The figures are placed not in the center, where they would obstruct the view through the windows of the backroom and the frontroom on the house silhouette on the other side of the street; as the figures would likewise impair the still more interesting view through the three open doors of the house on the gracht and the sunny facade of

the house vis-à-vis. The unusual sideward arrangement of the two women to the left was motivated through the enormous linen closet, seen in foreshortening against the left wall. There is, in fact, no question of any compositional scheme whatsoever. The women, most likely, posed before the painter for a preliminary sketch. In other pictures, especially those with a great number of figures, of whom the painter had no occasion to make a sketch, they were arranged in such a way as to make the togetherness look casual. Of course, the main figures were brought to the foreground but it would be too far stretched, if this arrangement, purely for the sake of clarity, should be puffed up into compositional artistry.

Art historians have many a time tried to classify the genre pictures. They distinguished them according to the social rank of the figures: officers, soldiers, aristocrats, middle class, bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie, artisans, farmers, etc.; or according to their momentary occupation: courting, performing music, drinking, feasting, etc.; or according to the place where they are assembled: the salon of one or another "heerenhuis," livingroom, bedroom, kitchen, city tavern, village pothouse, farmhouse, stable, and let us not forget, the brothel de luxe, or the budget brothel. However, I cannot see the practical use of these classifications. There is hardly any picture that does not come under all three headings. Besides where does the brothel begin and where does it end? In the seventeenth century, almost every tavern and pothouse in Holland was a clandestine house of sin. And how many one-girl-brothels were there, where an elderly woman had capitalized on the abdominal charms of her maid-servant, if not her daughter? A picture of this kind is the *Gallant Offering* by Jan Steen. The picture is typical for the kind of realism of the first half of the seventeenth century.

I should like to quote the rhymed descriptions of a tavern-scene by Adriaen Brouwer (1606-1638), and a kermis scene by Adraen van Ostade (1610-1685), because they make us see these works not with our eyes of the twentieth century, but with the eyes of the people of the seventeenth century.

The first poem is from Cornelis de Bie:¹⁶¹ "Here we see a peasant, drunk as a lord, and vomiting; his wife is about to give him a sound licking with a stick. There we see a sailor with a

pint in his fist. Here a bunch of rogues cheating at cards. There a dirty fellow grasping after the apron of the maid. There they are fighting with cans, chairs, and benches, who shall foot the bill. There we see cuddling country folks, there gaiety and singing. Here a wife cleaning a child besmattered with dirt. There a dog gobbling up the hotch-potch. In short, all that you see in this beautiful picture is nothing but a bustle of all kind of monkey-business."

The second poem by L. Rotgans is a translation into words of Adriaen van Ostade's *Kermisvreugde*:¹⁶²

"She danced along to the sound of the strings.
A young peasant with a chin still smooth and hairless
Is on her left side and leads her by the hand.
His hat rests on one ear, a little drivel pipe burning
And smoking in his mouth. They trip up and down,
And spin like a top, and slip along each other.
Kees Rednose plays the fiddle while filling his paunch
With beer. The dancer presses his sweetheart in his arm.
She draws in, after the dance, the breath of boor Tewis
At the tip of his smoky lips.
The breath still stinking of all the stuff swallowed
From boorish mugs, while sitting on the beer bench.
The boor rubs himself and grins, after pressing her jaws,
Like a Satyr, who fond of dainties
Takes unawares the rural goddess and kisses her in spite of
herself.

The dancing room swarms with women and men.
My ears are deafened by the clicking of the cans.
Here, in the corner, two lovers sitting side by side,
And fondling mouth on mouth, entangled in love.
Over there a folksong arises from more than thirty throats,
A funny lied without sense and mutilated all over.
While slow Lammert sits on swift Wyburg's lap,
She chants Velsen's revenge and landlord Floris' death."

It is clear that the later generations of the second part of the seventeenth century did no longer buy this kind of art. What does not mean, that they had reached a higher cultural level. I am sure that they still liked it, but it did no longer fit into the elegance of their dignified homes. Unless, of course, the vulgarity of the subject was camouflaged by salon painters as

Gerard Terborch (1617-1681), Pieter de Hooch (1629-after 1689), Gabriel Metsu (1629-1667), Kaspar Netscher (1632-1684), Frans van Mieris (1635-1681), to such a degree that only roués could recognize these seemingly respectable family scenes for what they really were: "bordeelstukjes." Even an experienced man as Goethe one day committed himself awfully as he interpreted a regular *Hollandisch Seduction* as *Paternal Advice*. We may be sure however, that most of the younger generation hugged themselves with delight and rubbed their hands, and chuckled and gloated over the salaciousness of Brouwer and Ostade just as wholeheartedly as their sainted fathers and grandfathers, who bought them for the decoration of their simple houses. How do we know? Well, we have only to read some of the literary products of the aristocrats, which are many times not only sexual, but even stercorous, urinous, and flatulent profligacies. Holland's national poet Joost van den Vondel, who wrote a lot of theological tragedies.

Jacon Cats (1577-1660) was the most popular doggerelist of the seventeenth century. He was the son of wealthy parents, studied law at the Universities of Leyden, Orleans, and Paris, settled in Middelburg, the capital of the Province Zealand, and, in 1623, was appointed to Pensionary of the town. He speculated in "Dyckagien" (reclaiming and poldering land) in England and Zealand, and was one of the richest men of Holland. With patriarchal benevolence he occupied himself with the health, the food, the digestion, the stooling, the constipation, the courtship, the marriage, the coition, the pregnancy of his fellow citizens, all in rhyme, and occasionally even with the untranslatable secrets of the most "refined" etiquette. One example:

The aristocrat Constantine Huygens, Secretary of Prince Frederick Henry of Orange, published a poem with the title: *L'anatomie, Paradoxes en Satyre*. He anatomizes the female body in such a nauseating way that at the end of the poem he asks his Clorinde to dress because he was going to faint for vomiting:

"Va viste te cacher

Je me sens défaillir à force de cracher."

The same dignified Huygens wrote a comedy with the title: *Trijntje Cornelisdr-Klucht*, in which he relates the adventures

of his heroine Trijntje, the wife of a Dutch skipper, how she landed in Antwerp in the house of Marie "de snol" (the harlot), how she was dosed with liquor, how she was robbed of her money, her jewelry, and even stripped of her clothes by Marie "de snol" and Francisco "de pol" (the gigolo), and finally, in old masculine garments, was deposited on a dung-hill. The next morning she awoke, but still so fuddled, that she needed the assistance of a passing-by night-watchman to investigate whether she was a woman or perhaps a man.

Hanneken: Monsieur, what did you say?

Trijntje: I am neither a monsieur, nor a man. Whether my trousers are green or yellow, that does not mean a thing. For all that, I am Trijntje Kernelis.

Hanneken: What do you say?

Trijntje: A man, just as your sister or your mom is a man.

Hanneken: A woman? Let me see.

Trijntje: Leave me alone. I'm no whore. You got at the wrong address. I tell you, leave me alone, otherwise, by God, I shall crush you under my feet. You are thinking pumpkins of yourself.

Hanneken: Why so ill-natured? I did not know until now, that you were a real woman. May I, at least, inspect your bosom? In Antwerp no woman objects. None of your little tempers, please. Why should you not show me your little nipples?

Trijntje: Go away! You silly fool. Men are all alike, Although we are here alone, I will not. I refuse even if you should think that I lie and want to cheat you unto the belief. Listen, feel just from the outside. What does that stuff look like? Something of your father or of your mother?

Hanneken: Truly, it is a female! My darling! My honey! My girl, may I render you a service somewhere else? I give you my whole body.

Trijntje: Only your legs do I need. Lend them to me for a while, and help me to get away."

Man's inveterate joy at the misfortune of others will be the explanation why the stripping and stealing of clothes turn up in farces and paintings so many times. In the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam we find this scene painted by Jan Steen with the

title *After the Merrymaking*. It shows a befuddled woman flopped on a bench with a dead drunk man on her side. The two musicians who had accompanied the Bacchanalia and Veneralia with their violin and cello are just about to sneak out with the clothes of the gentleman. The Louvre at Paris exhibits another picture by Jan Steen with the title *Bad Company*. Two harlots are robbing a boozy sinner of his clothes and belongings while a gigolo brightens up the scene by giving his fiddle the works.

Bredero did not belong to the aristocracy, but Maria Tesselschade, the daughter of the Catholic poet Roemer Visscher (1547-1620) did. In 1623, she married the navy officer Allart Crombach who died in 1634. In her forties she was still so attractive that Professor van Baerle in Amsterdam, and Constantine Huygens asked her in marriage. In the exclusive literary and musical salon of the poet P. C. Hooft, Tesselschade was the principal female person. Bredero was, in 1616, over head and ears in love with her. G. Kalff¹⁶⁴ surmises that Bredero had not only dedicated his play *Lucelle* to Tesselschade, but that the play was besides a covert protestation of his love. Axagues, a man of low descent but with great human qualities would have been a personification of the author, as the heroine Lucelle was an impersonation of Tesselschade. The contents of the work is a plea for youth, talent, and noble mind, to whom Bredero opposes the old "klouwers" (grafters) and rich lovers. And now let me quote three lines from *Lucelle* to give a fair sampling of Bredero's realism. One of the personages of the play had been killed. Lecker remarks: "His body is already cold. Now we shall have to stow him away under the clods. Ah! how he is lying there with his nose upward . . . Shall I throw him with a stone to his neck into the sluice, or shall I slip him into the outhouse?" I do not think that in the seventeenth century any French, English, or German girl of high standing would have accepted the dedication of a work of which the author himself confessed in the preface that he had used the "slordichste" (the most sluttish) expressions just to please the man in the street. Maria Tesselschade took it.

As a last proof for the intrepid sense of reality even high up in the upper ten circles of Holland, I want to commemorate the following fact. Princess Amalia von Solms, the wife of Prince

Frederick Henry of Orange had decorated one of the walls of her palace Het Huis ten Bosch with a landscape with cattle, titled: *Meierhof* by Paulus Potter (1625-1654). In the literature of those days it was called (the spouting cow). Later it was sold to Kassel and actually it is one of the masterworks of the Hermitage at Leningrad.

Bredero was Holland's most genuine realist of the whole seventeenth century. Through his descent—his father was a cobbler—he was already predestined to think and act in the light of things as they are, and to repudiate visionary schemes. In the preface of his *Groot Lied-boeck*,¹⁶⁵ he characterizes his art in the following words: "Fat lot do I care whether I learn my mother-language from a mighty king or from a poor beggar, whether the words come out of the rubbish-bin or out of the most elegant and biggest treasure-houses of the world . . . I have read no book but the book of general use. If I should have made mistakes due to my ignorance of foreign languages, sciences, and arts—excuse the illiterate layman and indulge me a little bit. As a painter I have stuck to the painter's maxim: The best painters are those who are most faithful to life, and not the ones who believe to be smart when they have their models pose in unnatural postures. I have done my utmost to express my boorish jokes in the sweetest boorish words."

Listen to Bredero's story of the love adventures of a village Juliet in his play: *Klucht van den Meulenaar, 1613*: "Did he not go to Jannetje Stellaers? He climbed from the backyard through her window, without a light and without a candle, and suddenly stood before her bed. He pushed back the blanket and the sheet. She, poor slut, had already been told by her mother that the place was haunted, when the nights were very brown. But she certainly did feel this time, that it was neither a night-mare nor a nightgelding. She was lying there like in a wine-press. She did not know what to do. What could she do, the poor lass? But he did all that he liked to. And they sweated and sweated Judas' sweat, and she dared not to hiccup nor to talk. And then he quietly sneaked home again.

"But the next morning, when it began to dawn, she told her mother, little by little, what had happened to her. Hush! Hush! said the mother, you were dreaming, that is only fiddle-faddle,

my child, that is just thick blood that you have felt raging up and quieting down. It is nothing at all. I went through these things myself. It will pass off from alone. When it happens again, then you just make the sign of the cross with your tongue. Allright, she thought.

"But after three weeks he stole again to the same girl under the blanket. But while he chased the little mouse into the little trap, she did not manage to make the sign of the cross with her tongue, but after it had sufficiently stormed and rained, she furiously crossed and blessed herself. And then he went again."

Bredero continues his story as follows: "The girl soon began to feel queer. She eructed, she vomited, she unlaced her breasts, and she got oh! so pale. She lost her taste of food, she longed for cherries and periwinkles, imagine, in the heart of winter! The mother sent for Jan the Doctor. But whatever he gave her, it was medicine and money lost. Her eyes fell in, her nose became sharper, her belly was swollen as if she were dropsical. Then the window-tapper, Neel with the thin mouth, was the first to state that she was pregnant. Her father raged and raged and did not stop raging, like the devil incarnate. He would have her enjailed in a dark hole by Willem Verdoes. But Josep Lammertsz, with his chin full of pustules and stubbles, without even having seen the girl, was coupled to her by his godmother. And the goen was oh! so glad, I cannot tell you how glad, because he got a broken-in mare and a nice little filly into the bargain."

Another sampling of undiluted Dutch realism is to be found in Bredero's *Spaanschen Brabander Jerolimo*. The servant Rob-beknol relates one of the love adventures of his mother: "When my mom, Aaltje Melis, heard of his [her husband's] death, she moved with me and all her belongings to Amsterdam, and she rented a little house, and she washed on the vacant plots the shirts of the sailors and the laundry of other people. Then she happened to get acquainted with the servant groom of Duckdalf. You see, he brought her all the laundry of his master. He was an ugly nigger, and she was good looking or, what you call, handsome. But, pish! when a woman is green, she would do it with the hangman, with a dog, even with the devil. My mom was a

widow, with quick and hot blood, and she knew too well, how swell frigging was. What could she do? Well, she laid to the Moor, because she wanted to find out whether the blackamoors are just as soft, as it was rumored. But the rascal entered into her as hard as a nail, so that she conceived a nice little blacky. How glad she was? Well you can make that out for yourself."

But the most picturesque of all is Bredero's song:

"Arent Pieter Gysen, and Mieuwes, and Jaap, and Leen, and Klausjen, and Kloentjen, they ganged up to the village of Vinkeveen. Why? Well, old Frans had spent a goose to be pulled off ariding.

Arent Pieter Gysen was neatly in brown. His hat with bloomy velvet, put on rather saucily, a bit to the side, a bit smutty, hardly did it cover the half of his skull.

But Mieuwes, Leen, Jaap, Klaas and Kloen were dressed in an old-fashioned way, in red, in white, in green, in gray, in yellow, in violet, in blue, as old country people like it.

When the bunch came to Vinkeveen, they met there Keesjen, and Teunis, and Jan Schram, and Dirk of Diemerdam, with Simon Sloom, and sullen Jan, with Tijs, and Barend Bam.

The girls of the Vecht and of the neighborhood of Vinkeveen, how wonderfully had they polished up their Sunday togs. Oh! did they smell fine! But how do you like that? Fij had borrowed the girdle of lank Sij.

They joined the folks, and all started to chow, to guzzle to sing, to toddle and to dance, to dice and to gamble. They cried for wine, they could not do without, every boor felt himself a lord.

But Mieuwes and Trijntje, that sweet naughty slut, they sneaked together out of the house into the hay-stack, where they fondled and fumbled, and rummaged, boy oh boy, was that swell. I should say, they had a hell of a time.

Sullen Arent was the first who drew a knife against Piet-moron and grumpy Kes, but Brand of Kaalenes, he took a dung-fork, but got a slash and five, six more guys.

The girls ran away and let them fight. Cans and candles, nothing remained on its place. But Kloen thrust and struck out so fiercely that one of the frogs of Vinkeveen fell dead to the ground.

Symen took the spit, the broom and the tongs and socked Ebbert and Krelis in the snoot. The gang did not stop, maybe for the brandy or whatsoever. I did not stay any longer.

You gentlemen, and you burghers, honorable and peaceful, stay away from village jinks. Seldom do they go out without bloodshed. Drink with me a rummer of wine, that's better for you."

EXTERIEURS

The *extérieurs* (outdoor scenes) are, of course, the counterpart of the *intérieurs* (indoor scenes). What both have in common is the accentuation of the milieu. Every milieu, as I have explained, calls for an integration. For the outdoor scenes, however, we have to distinguish between the man-made milieu (town, village, square, street, road, canal, field, meadow, etc.) where man will be the natural complement; and, let me call it, the god-made milieu (solid wood, dunes, etc.), where man cannot be considered to be indispensable for the disclosure of the sense of the scene. The presence of man in the solitude of the dunes is nothing but the anticipation of his subsequent absence. Man is in this surrounding a rather disturbing element. Dunes are more of dunes without man.

The art historians classify the pictures of outdoor scenery, into landscapes (with the subdivision of landscapes with figures, landscapes without figures, landscapes with animals, and landscapes with figures and animals); then seascapes, which are rather views of ships, views of towns, villages, squares, street, buildings, etc. Since life likes to live away even over the most liberally constructed scenes, I wonder whether all these classifications have any sense. May be as it is, for the scope of this book the comprehensive denomination of *extérieurs*, or outdoor scenes, will do.

There are three methods to learn to see and to live Dutch landscapes. The first method is to compare them with landscapes painted by contemporary court painters. The second method is to compare the painted landscapes with descriptions of the Dutch reality in literary works. The third method is to compare the landscapes direct with the Dutch countryside itself.

In seventeenth century France, the best landscape painters were Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665) and Claude Lorrain (1600-1682). They perceived nature, of course, in the same realistic way as the Dutch painters did. A great number of masterly drawings made by Poussin in the surrounding of Rome prove this. But they felt that realist paintings would not fit into the pattern of the French court art, nor into the general style of heroic, pathetic, and rhetoric life in France. Therefore, Poussin used his drawings only as raw material for the composition of idealist landscapes which were to be the prospective milieu of idealist (mythological) figures. The landscapes of Poussin and Lorrain were always intellectual and artificial, they lacked immediacy. They make the impression of stage backgrounds, or stage coulisses. It is as if the trees and boscsages are equipped with casters mounted in a swivel frame to facilitate the rearrangement or the exchange of these properties. The trees and the plants have no roots. The skies look as if they were suspended from the flies by means of pulley ropes. No wind blows through the leaves of canvas. "Nature" smells there after oil, turpentine, fish-glue and the sweat of stage-hands, whereas the painted Dutch countryside scents after moist soil, and clover, and hay, with a delicious tinge of salty sea air. The French painters with their theatrical compositions could not but denature nature. The Dutch painters did not give the problem of composition a second thought: their landscapes were just replicas of what they saw before them.

But the greatest achievement of the Dutch extérieurs was the color. In the second decade of the seventeenth century the Dutch realists discovered the invisibility of the local color. To a certain degree the local color was there, in the same way as the fond continues behind the figures, although we do not see any fond on that spot. The color in reality is not the local color of the thing but a color appearance different from the local color, in other words, we perceive only the modification of the local color dependent directly on the source of light (sun, moon, artificial light), and indirectly on the reflections by the surrounding objects (clouds, water, trees, walls, etc.). The Dutch realists were, if not the first, anyway the best light painters. It looks many times, for instance in the landscapes by Jan van Goyen

(1596-1656) and Aelbert Cuyp (1620-1691), as if the artists were more interested in the light substance floating in the space between the object and the eye of the spectator, than in the material substance of the objects themselves. The Dutch realists have taught the world how to paint atmosphere. The oldest poetic description of atmosphere I found in *Stommen Ridder* (1618) by the painter and poet Bredero:

“The sun sticks up its head
And studs the tops of the hills
With its glittering little lights. What views!
What prospects, far away and hazy,
Are there dozing between gray and blue.

The dewy tree shines like a jewel,
The gay finch warbles and titters
On its branches, now wild, then tame,
And at once again on another branch
It skips and hops with its mate.”

I have compared the French and the Dutch landscapes of the seventeenth century, as I have expressly mentioned before, with the sole purpose of clarifying the difference between the two. My purpose was not to evaluate and, least of all, to substantiate the superiority or inferiority of one art school to the other. It would be an abortive enterprise, because we should need a *common* standard on which the evaluation had to be based, and such standards do not exist. Both schools started from quite opposite presuppositions and have thus different standards. It would be unfair to depreciate the French landscape style on the basis of the Dutch standard; or reject the Dutch style on the ground of the French norm. The French artists of the seventeenth century premised that art should have grandeur and splendor, and if nature occasionally missed the desired magnificence, well, then it would be the task of the court painter to recreate nature, which can only result in a denaturation of nature. The Dutch painters, on the other hand, postulated that art should be true to nature in general, and true to the specific Dutch reality in particular. It follows from all this that the French landscape and the Dutch landscape are equally perfect, because they are each in its own way, the adequate expression of life which in France was idealist, in Holland materialist.

It is quite another story if a Dutch painter from Dutch descent, educated and living in Holland, paints his Dutch landscapes in the French or Italian heroic tradition, which is so inadequate to the Dutch nature with its flat lands, its plain language, and the unglazed and unglossed character of the average Hollander. We cannot help suspecting such a man of formalism and mannerism.

The twelve greatest Dutch landscape painters of the seventeenth century (ordered after their age) were: Hendrik Avercamp (1585-1663), Esaias van de Velde (1590-1630), Jan van Goyen (1596-1656), Salomon van Ruysdael (1600-1670), Aernoud van der Neer (1603-1677), Philips Wouwermans (1619-1668), Aelbert Cuyp (1620-1691), Jan Wynants (1625-1682), Paulus Potter (1625-1654), Jacob van Ruysdael (1629-1681), Adriaen van de Velde (1635-1672), and Meindert Hobbema (1638-1709). Most of them kept their art "van vreemde smetten vrij" (free from foreign spots). But about the middle of the century, Wouwermans, Cuyp and Adriaen van de Velde, began to make concessions to the exotic taste of so many Dutch parvenus, who found the simple Dutch landscape no longer fitting to their swelldom. Hence the occasional Italianizations of their art. And Holland's greatest landscape painter Jacob van Ruysdael, probably influenced by Allart van Everdingen (1621-1675), who earned a lot of money with his cheap Norwegian sceneries, began to adulterate his great art with mountains and cascades, which he had never seen, leave alone, lived. The overgreat number of landscape painters who painted only in Italian or French (second hand Italian) style, do not concern us in this context. Besides, as artists, they were more or less gifted mediocrities.

All the painters of ships, views of towns, squares, streets, or buildings remained, of course, pure realists. They could not be exposed to the danger of alienation, thanks to the very Dutch subject matter of their works of art.

I should like to add here a few specimens of very simple but deeply lived natural scenes, taken from the Dutch literature. The first one is to be found in Bredero's *Treurspel van Rodderick ende Alphonsus* (1611):

"The sheep nibble and slaver
The green grass-blades.

Tripping and tossing up
Dust which clouds them in,
And covers the lusty leaves.
For, look, the barren heath
Is drift-sand and dry clay
And full of sundry little pebbles."

The next two are excerpts from Huygens *Hofwijck*, description of his pleasure-ground near the Hague:

"Herein excells Hofwijck. In the Veranda of the Hague
There is only linden-wood, planted by linden-wood,
Separated from a row of brick houses, where man, and horse,
and car

Chase away the fledged warblers from the sweet Hague.
Thanks to the dirty bustle of cars, and man, and horse,
They chase to Hofwijck, what most redounds to Hofwijck's
credit:

The goldfinch, first of all, then the linnet, starling, thrush,
The nightingale nestles here and warbles with his sweetheart.
The cuckoo beats the tune, and boasts of his adultery,
Free as he is, since the sire has no wife:
His only pastime is tormenting males and females,
And many a one laughs, although his hairs stand on end.
How they dance, these free folks, from one branch on another,
And when the linden-tree tires them, well, then they chose
another roof,
A roof of alder-leaves."

In the last excerpt Huygens pictures his "full Fleet,"
"which cannot be approached.
Look how boat or barge push each other.
Look how the towlines are inter-woven. Horse behind horse,
Sail behind sail, rudder against rudder.
Listen how they cry: Keep on, Keep inside, Keep outside,
How the driver on the tow-horse whistles away his discomfort,
Or cools with a song the blisters he rides,
Not once, and only short, but steady and gay,
All night and all day."

Before coming to a close, I want to point to the striking parallelism between Dutch literature and Dutch painting, dealing with what was then the most typical sport in Holland: Sliding, skating, sledging, sleighing, and "kolving" (hockey). There was hardly a landscape painter who did not make a contribution to this subject. I mention only the names of Hendrik Avercamp,

Esaias van de Velde, Jan van Goyen, Salomon van Ruysdael, Aert van der Neer, Jan van Capelle, Adriaen van de Velde, Jan Beerstraten, Joannes Wildens, David Vinck-Boons, etc. The best description in the literature is the one by Bredero in *Moortje* (1615) : "What is that for a bustle and a hubbub and a skirmishing? My eyes swim in my head. What is that for a throng of boys and girls about the granary? What a fuss does Nies Kalckx make, showing off her brother-in-law? Ho there! Hey, Harmen with his highy tighty manners, who always runs and whirs so broadly, gets tangled in her skate, so that the good girl flings down. Oh! Let me not laugh myself to death, because she has fallen on her nose, but so that you can see her bare seat. There comes Jueriaen with his sick body on the ice, the poor bungler skates with tall Lijs. She runs faster than him, he lets himself be dragged and struggles along awkwardly. How he gropes about after her! He hobbles, he jumps without gathering much space. The people indulges to their heart's content in Jueriaen's hindmost, which moves so pleasantly when he lets himself slide, that really they stand still and laugh till they nearly crack their pants. There is stiff Dirck with his newly baked wife. How frozen does he move! He wears his head so stiff, as if it were stuck on a stake, and he has a pair of legs . . . that Lobbrich used to say that he was the pick of the town. . . . It is such a sweet man, and he can tug himself in so warmly, says: heat never makes your limbs limp . . . But Jan What-is-his-name shoves in a push-sledge his granny, his wife, his children, and his godmother. He sticks out his derrière as if he were going to squat."

REMBRANDT'S ART

REMBRANDT'S LIFE—SELF PORTRAIT OF 1661

Rembrandt was born on July 15, 1606, at Leyden. His father Harmen Gerritsz van Ryn was a miller, his mother Cornelia Willems-daughter van Zuytbroeck the daughter of a baker. It is generally accepted that Rembrandt's parents were Mennonites, but they were certainly not very orthodox, if at all. The fact that Rembrandt was baptized in the Reformed Church of St. Anna Parochie does not mean much. The minute books of the Anabaptists prove that this happened many times, but the fact that this happened in so early an age, arouses suspicion. Anabaptists were obliged to postpone baptism until the children had grown up.

At the age of seven, Rembrandt attended the Latin school at Leyden, and on May 20, 1620, he was matriculated in the University of Leyden. Did he intend to study theology with a scholarship of the States? Or liberal arts with a view to a career as a formalist painter? Or anatomy, which could be helpful to him as a realist painter? Or was the matriculation just a make-believe to get exemption from military service and from excise on wine, beer, and brandy? Nobody knows. Anyway the pleasures of student life did not last very long, since Rembrandt was, in 1621, an apprentice in the workshop of Jacob Isaacs. Van Swanenburgh, a ham painter who specialized in biblical and mythological subjects. He stayed there for three years, and then Rembrandt moved to Amsterdam where Pieter Lastman (1583-1633), an academician who had studied in Rome, was the most renowned painter of the capital. After one year and a half, we find Rembrandt in the Amsterdam workshop of another academician Jacob Pynas (c.1590-after 1639), where he worked only for a few months. In 1627 Rembrandt opened

his own atelier in Leyden, together with Jan Lievens (1607-1674).

In 1631, Rembrandt moved to Amsterdam and stayed there for the rest of his life. At the beginning, he lived in the house of the art dealer Hendrik van Uylenburgh in the Joden Breestraat. He got there acquainted with a niece of his landlord, Saskia van Uylenburgh, the daughter of the late burgomaster of Leeuwarden in Friesland. It did not take long before Rembrandt had established his reputation in Amsterdam; he was indebted for his success to his group portrait *Anatomical Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp* (1632), with which he had overcome his two competitors Thomas de Keyser (1596/1597-1667) and Elias (1590/1591-c. 1656). A year later he was engaged to Saskia, and in 1634 he married her. Thanks to her fortune of 40,000 Guilders, Rembrandt was from then on independent. He could finally paint whom he liked, and when he liked, and how he liked. During the years 1632 till 1634, he achieved fifty portraits, for which he was paid 500 guilders a piece. He was during these years social, and occasionally prepared to make concessions to please his patrons. After his marriage there was no longer a question of concessions to the taste of whomsoever. The years 1634-1639 were for Rembrandt the most decisive of his life: he changed his style, which will be the subject of a later chapter.

In 1639 he bought the princely house in the Joden Breestraat, which is nowadays a Rembrandt museum. It is there that in 1641, his son Titus was born, and, in 1649 his wife Saskia died. A new chapter of his life opened with Geertge Dircx, the widow of the trumpeter Abraham Claesz. She was hired as a governess of his son Titus. Of course, Rembrandt had in no time a serious love affair with the merry widow, who even maintained (what Rembrandt later denied) that he had promised to marry her. Geertge died as a nerve-patient in the house of correction at Gouda, in 1650.

1649 was for Rembrandt a memorable year. Hendrickje Stoffels, twenty three years old, took over the care of Titus and of the forty-three year old Rembrandt himself. Their love was blessed many times, but all the babies died in an early age, with the exception of their daughter Cornelia.

Rembrandt was a great painter but a poor financier. He had

already gone far beyond the limits with the buy of his house, he lived as a grand seigneur, he spent a lot of money on his private collection, and he lost considerable sums speculating "in the sea and in trade." In 1656 came the catastrophe. His friends, among others the Burgomaster of Amsterdam Jan Six, who had lent him a relatively small sum of money, refused further delay of payment, and Rembrandt was declared bankrupt. His collections (among others pictures by Adriaen Brouwer, Jan Lievens, Hercules Seghers, Palma Vecchio, Giorgione, Pieter Lastman, Jan Porcellis, Jacopo Bassano, Lucas van Valckenborch, Jan Pynas, Lucas van Leyden, Raphael, van Eijck, Letio Orsi, and Simon de Vlieger) were sold in 1657; his house, his furniture, and his other belongings in 1658. He remained insolvent until his death. Rembrandt would certainly have married Hendrickje, if the will of Saskia had not stipulated that he would lose the usufruct of the fortune of his son in case of remarriage. The family moved to the Rozengracht in 1660, where Hendrickje opened a picture and print shop. The backroom of the shop was Rembrandt's atelier. Hendrickje died in 1662 (the year of the *Syndics*.) Titus died in 1668, Cornelia carried on the household, till Rembrandt himself died in 1669.

HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SUPERNATURAL

It is impossible to comprehend the relation of a human being to the things of nature (man, world, and time), without knowledge of his relation to the supernatural (god, heaven, and eternity): his belief in or his renegading of the latter will develop differential characteristics in the injection of the things without him into his self, and the projection of his self into the world. This is the reason why we have to investigate Rembrandt's religiosity, eventually his irreligiosity. The question would not concern us, had not Rembrandt gestalted his experiences in his art so intensely that his works have become messages from man to man. Through the fact of our reception of his messages, we have implicitly incurred the obligation to understand them objectively, that is to say, in Rembrandt's sense.

The question of Rembrandt's religiosity-irreligiosity has become acute, since the art historians consider this question as

closed: the overwhelming number of religious subjects, they argue, could not have been created but by a profoundly religious man. As if we could not conclude, just as rightly, from the great number of mythological subjects that Rembrandt must have been a 100% pagan.

Let us open the closed question and first investigate Rembrandt's eventual affiliation with one or another church. There are three possibilities: he was a Mennonite (Anabaptist), or a Reformed (Calvinist), or he was nothing at all. In case of the latter, the main question arises: Was Rembrandt religious, as the atheist Spinoza was religious; or was he irreligious?

Mennonism was one of the hundreds of sects into which Anabaptism had split in the second half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century. The founder of the sect was Menno Simons (1492-1559) of Friesland. He and his followers took the standpoint that infant baptism had no Scripture warrant and, besides, was inefficacious. Only believers could be baptized, therefore, baptism had to be postponed till man was past his prime and had reached the age of reason. Rembrandt was baptized in an early age, which would give at the utmost evidence for the unorthodox Mennonism of his parents. Rembrandt himself can not be held responsible for this act. His baptism whensoever and wherever does not mean a thing. In the seventeenth century every one had to be baptized, because there were no registrars in Holland, and the baptism certificate was thus the indispensable substitute for the birth certificate. So his baptism as a baby in a Reformed church is inconclusive.

A disproof of Mennonism might be seen in the early baptism of his two children Titus and Cornelia in a Reformed church. But most likely Rembrandt made these arrangements to please the two Calvinist mothers. Of greater significance seems to be his marriage with Saskia, because the Mennonists stood for the restriction of marriage to members of the group. Saskia was a member of the Reformed church. There is one thing more. The Mennonists advocated utter plainness of dress. They even used hooks instead of buttons. Furthermore, they were not allowed to wear arms. I do not think that Rembrandt's *Self-portrait* with his wife sitting on his knee (Museum of Dresden), before a luxuriously dressed table, with a goblet in his hand

and an épée on his side, makes an Mennonite impression. That was in the late thirties.

Nor was his love affair in the forties with Geertge, and, what the self-righteous people of this day called, his concubinage with Hendrickje Stoffels, and the propagation of a number of children of sin, in accordance with the puritan austerity and chastity that the Anabaptists required from their Brothers and Sisters.

The fact that Rembrandt painted the portraits of Renier Anslo, who was a minister of the Waterland Anabaptists at Amsterdam (the portrait of the man and his wife is in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum at Berlin), and also painted a portrait of the Mennonite Alençon, are irrelevant. He painted Contra-Remonstrants, as Sylvius, without being a Contra-Remonstrant. He painted Arminians as Uytenbogaert, without ever belonging to the Remonstrants. He painted, according to Landsberger,¹⁶⁶ thirty-seven Jews, among them Rabbi Manasse-ben Israel and Rabbi Saul levi Morteira, without being a Jew.

In the work of Filippo Baldinucci¹⁶⁷ we find the notice that Rembrandt, after the death of his wife, would have converted to Mennonism. Baldinucci got this news from the Dane Bernhard Kheil who from 1648 till 1656 was a pupil in Rembrandt's workshop. Saskia died in 1642. The years from 1642 till 1648 were the wildest years of Rembrandt's life. Think of the public scandal aroused by his liaison with the widow Geertge Dircks, which ended in a law suit. Rembrandt was obviously not so innocent as he pleaded, otherwise he would not have been condemned to pay Geertge an annuity for the time of her life. In 1645 began a new romance with the twenty-three year old Hendrickje. Again he was the talk of the town and to such a degree that the Consistorium of the Reformed church found it necessary to meddle in. Not only Hendrickje, but also Rembrandt were summoned before the ecclesiastical tribunal. And in those turbulent and chequered days Rembrandt would have converted to a puritan sect? Believe it who will.

The rumor of the conversion, if Kheil has not hatched up the story at all, may have been based on the friendship of Rembrandt with Renier Anslo, with whom he probably got acquainted through Manasse-ben Israel, who lived vis-à-vis in the Joden

Breestraat. Rembrandt painted his portrait, made four etchings for his book *Piedra Gloriosa*,¹⁶⁸ and loved his daughter. Coppier¹⁶⁹ tells us that the girl was rumored in Amsterdam to have been the mistress of Rembrandt, and that on August 15, 1652, a child was buried, of which Rembrandt had declared to be the father. Manasse-ben Israel was closely associated with the Anabaptists of Waterland.

If Rembrandt should have converted to Mennonism, would it then not be remarkable that Samuel van Hoogstraeten, who was a pupil of Rembrandt in the fifties, does not breathe a single word in his book¹⁷⁰ on this spectacular conversion, whereas van Hoogstraeten himself was a Mennonist?

Jan Huizinga¹⁷¹ does not believe in Rembrandt's conversion either. The Mennonites were hostile to all kind of arts. They sided with the Calvinists. If Rembrandt should have felt the need to go to the Church and to repent his many sins, he would as an artist certainly not have joined the Mennonites.

If it is true that Rembrandt never was a Mennonite, is it possible that he was a member of the Reformed church?

The facts that seem to speak for this assumption are the following:

1) Rembrandt was baptized, as I have mentioned, in St. Anna Parochie, and the sacrament was administered in a Reformed church and by a Reformed dominé.

2) He married in a Reformed church in Amsterdam, and his wife was educated in the Reformed faith.

3) His son Titus and his daughter Cornelia were baptized in a Reformed church.

4) Rembrandt died on October 4, 1669, and was buried in the Reformed Wester Kerk in Amsterdam.

I have already refuted these facts. The minutes of the Anabaptists prove that children were many times baptized in Reformed churches. His burial in the Wester Kerk is just as inconclusive as the other facts. The Wester Kerk was a general burial-place, where believers and unbelievers rested side by side. The atheist Jew Spinoza was buried in the protestant New Church on het Spui in the Hague.

And now a few facts that make it most unlikely that Rembrandt was a Calvinist. In the first place, Rembrandt was in

possession of a so-called Old Bible, and not a State Bible. To understand the drift of this argument we must know that the Calvinists in Holland held the Old Bible in profound contempt. It contained, they asserted, apocryphal books, besides the text was in many places falsified.¹⁷² To protect the faithful against spurious Word of God, a number of Dutch theologians under the leadership of Bogerman, and with the support of the States General, had undertaken a new translation between 1626-1635. The new bible got the name of "Statenbijbel" (State Bible). After the publication the State Bible was strictly obligatory for all parishioners of the Reformed church.

The second fact is still more conclusive. I have spoken before of the citation of Hendrickje before the Consistorium in Amsterdam. In fact she was three times cited. The first time together with Rembrandt. Neither of them appeared. The second time she alone got a summons, which she ignored. Then came a third citation for June 25, 1654, again for Hendrickje alone. And now what happened? Hendrickje, who appeared, although she was pregnant, heard there that she was excluded from the Lord's Supper. Rembrandt, the chief offender, the seducer of the girl, was not excluded. Why not? Well, Rembrandt did not come under the jurisdiction of the Consistorium, he was no member of the church.

To understand the significance of the third fact, I have to remind the reader that the Calvinists in Holland considered idolatry the most sacrilegious sin that man could ever commit. This explains why, during the Reformation, in no country of the world image breaking was so horrifying as in the Netherlands. Holland was during the seventeenth century the most tolerant country of Europe. The only citizens who did not enjoy freedom of religion were the Catholics. The Lutherans, the Anabaptists, the Jews were allowed to build churches and temples. Not so the Catholics. They were persecuted everywhere. Now it will be understandable that in the seventeenth century no member of the Reformed Church would dare to support the Catholics in their idolatry. But Rembrandt did. He painted, and drew, and etched Madonnas. I mention only the etching with *The Deathbed of Mary* (1639); and the etching *Mater dolorosa* (1641). He made representations of catholic saints, for instance, the etching

of *The Holy Catharine with the Wheel* (1638), in fact a portrait of Saskia; the etching of *St. Francis of Assisi* (1657); and finally a number of monks, and nuns. In view of these facts, it seems to me unthinkable, that Rembrandt should have been a Contra-Remonstrant, leave alone a Remonstrant.

There is, thus, no ground whatsoever for the acceptance of Rembrandt's churchiness.

About his religiosity, in the sense of Spinoza's religiosity, the opinions differ widely. The vast majority of the art historians assent, a very small minority dissent. The man who may be called the mouthpiece of this group, is Willi Drost.¹⁷³ He words his opinion as follows: "Keine religiöse Andacht, sondern ein bohrendes Eindringen in die Psyche des Menschen, eine fanatische Sucht, das Innere ob edel oder schuftig, schonungslos zu enthüllen" (No religious devotion but a merciless penetration into the soul of *man*, a fanatic lust to disclose his inmost, whether noble or dirty). I have underscored the word "Mensch" (man). According to Drost, Rembrandt is interested in Christ, only in so far as he is man. The Bible was for him not the word of God, but the richest history book ever written; an inexhaustible collection of raw material for an artist who has the ambition to picture human emotions in all their varieties; and, last but not least, the Bible was for him a formidable weapon to knock out his opponents, the dominés, who were not only hostile to art, but, still worse, incessantly meddled in what was most precious for Rembrandt, his freedom of life, and his freedom of love. To his hatred for these self-righteous men we are indebted for the great many representations of *Joseph and the Wife of Potiphar*, *The Good Samaritan*, *Jesus Expelling the Traders from the Temple*, *The Prodigal Son*, etc. It is not impossible that the pictures of Hendrickje Stoffels as *Bathseba*, and especially as the *Chaste Suzanna* belonged to the same category of malices. We shall later see, that he used the Bible (*Samson* series) for his fight against his Philistine in-laws, and, according to Coppier, to persiflate Rabbi Saul Levi Mortiera, who had cursed Spinoza out of the temple.

I for one think that Drost did not go far enough, by saying that Rembrandt did not show in his pictures any "religious devotion." No painter has violated the sanctity of the Bible with

such a lot of profanities, jokes, even dirt and filth as the man who has been proclaimed to be the great artist of Protestantism.

Take his etching of *Adam and Eve* (1638). They are both so monstrously ugly that we can only wonder whether they are apemen or manapes. All the theologians of former centuries had taught that Adam and Eve must have been the most beautiful couple that ever lived on earth, because God himself had modeled their bodies with his own divine hands, and besides, "he created them in his own image." Could Rembrandt have uglified them on purpose, to visualize in the form of their bodies the abomination of their sin? Impossible. They are represented *before* the Fall. How do we know? They are painted in the nude, besides, Adam is just reaching for the apple that Eve holds in her hands. The etching makes the impression of a clandestine blasphemy. It is, as if Rembrandt would whisper into our ears: Now you know, what God looks like. Behold his image!

The etching *Abraham entertaining the Lord and two Angels* (1656) is a religious clownery. The Lord with his long white beard and a kind of tallis over his head looks rather dignified indeed, but for his unheavenly abdomen. Not so the angel on his left. It is an angel, as his enormous wings prove, but an angel with a bald pate, a beard, and a turned-up mustache. Was there in the "multitude of the heavenly host" nothing better than this winged simpleton? How can Philippi write: Rembrandt never burlesqued religion. He never mocked holy persons or things!¹⁷⁴

In the pen drawing *Departure of Lot*, (c. 1655) of the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris we find the illustration of the story of Genesis XIX: 15-16, how angels led Lot, his wife, and his two daughters out of Sodom. The dog of Lot steals the show. The holy man, the three women, and the angels are tightly flocked together and occupy about two thirds of the available space, the third part to the right is reserved for the bandy-legged mongrel which leads the way as if the whole fuss was only on his behalf. Here again we come across an accessory which through the prominent place it occupies, distracts us from the essentials. Is it a warning of Rembrandt to take the stories of the Bible not too seriously, because they are just japes and quips?

Why did Rembrandt transform the good old Abraham of the *Sacrifice of Isaac* (1635) of the Hermitage at Leningrad, into a

brutal butcher? Was it to blame God, who put one of his most faithful servants to so silly a test? In his omniscience he, of course, knew beforehand that Abraham would not hesitate for a single moment to kill his own child? So what is the use of the whole show?

In the story of *Joseph at the Court of Potiphar*, Joseph, without any doubt, plays the leading character, and the wife of Potiphar is only a by-figure. Why did Rembrandt accentuate so excessively the disgusting lasciviousness of the queen, who flopped in her bed and naked to the buff, suddenly flew out to retain Joseph? Was it necessary to convince us of the chastity of the pubescent patriarch? But even an old patriarch would have taken to his heels at first sight of this royal rut. Maybe the story of Joseph was for Rembrandt only a pretext to give the Puritans in Holland the creeps.

Rembrandt's predilection for the story of Samson is certainly not religious. Shortly after his marriage with Saskia van Uylenburgh, we know from the records that the young husband picked a serious quarrel with Saskia's relatives. The in-laws had begun to slander him, till he finally resolved to stop them with a lawsuit. Unfortunately for Rembrandt, the case was dismissed. But now he took the laws in his own hands. So, I explain the very unusual subject matter of the picture of *Samson's wedding*. Samson and Delilah are the central figures, but our attention is especially attracted by the scummy visages of a couple of Philistines (!) who most likely are Samson's in-laws (!). To make this rabble still more disgusting, Rembrandt let them treat their wives in a rather vulgar manner.

The interpretation of this picture is corroborated by another work of Rembrandt with the singular title *Samson threatening his father-in-law*. The in-law seems to be in prison. We see only his head looking through a small latticed window, and Samson is generally considered to be a portrait of Rembrandt himself. It is true that the father of Saskia was no longer alive in the days that Rembrandt tried to revenge himself, but the main thing for Rembrandt might have been to chastise the in-laws in their representative.

Whether a third picture *Samson's Blinding* in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum at Berlin, was also motivated by Rembrandt's

hatred for his Philistine in-laws? It is not improbable, because he has made Samson's enemies as hideous and ghastly as ever possible.

The etching *Joseph Telling his Dreams* (1638) has again an irreligious lighting-conductor in the form of a dog fiercely biting after an annoying flea.

Rembrandt used his concubine Hendrickje Stoffels for biblical scenes with a female nude, not only for his *Bathseba* (1654) of the Louvre in Paris, but even for the biblical paragon of chastity *Suzanna in Bath* of the Mauritshuis at the Hague. All-right! The Catholic Raphael went still farther, he used his mistress as the model for his Holy Virgins. But at least Raphael idealized her. Rembrandt painted Suzanne so realistically (thus, without any retouche) that André Michel¹⁷⁵ was shocked by "la grande vulgarité" of her body. Indeed, the clearly discernible marks of her garters and her corset, and the limp breasts of the girl lead our thoughts not up to heaven, but straight down to the earth.

The pen drawing *Annunciation* (c.1658) of the Kunsthalle at Bremen shows a cat in the foreground turning its rear to the annunciating angel.

The etching *The Holy Family* (1654) shows a tomcat spinning and dreaming, most likely, of a gutterful of ruttish girl friends, the animal disturbs the religious atmosphere of the holy scene. Nobody will ever convince us that Rembrandt was not aware of these frivolities.

On the foreground of the picture *Sermon of John the Baptist* (1635) we see two mongrels fagging themselves to procreate their abominable race; and as second feature, a woman who has unpacked the lower part of her darling for a first instruction in Dutch cleanness. Rembrandt's pupil and admirer Samuel van Hoogstraeten¹⁷⁶ had already ventilated his indignation: "Say freely, that such things can happen and that they are natural, I say, that they are atrocious indecencies in this context."

In another scene of the New Testament: *The Disciples Awakening their Master* on board of a ship during a storm, a man of the crew hangs with his head overboard. He is disgustingly seasick.

On one of Rembrandt's *The Good Samaritan*, we see a dog squatting at its perfect leisure.

In the etching *The Return of the Prodigal Son* (1636), the hero is such a scoundrel with such a seedy-looking physiognomy that we can only laugh without meditating for a single moment on the forgivingness of the old father, although this was the point at issue.

A copy in red chalk of Leonardo's *The Last Supper* (c.1633) King Frederick August II collection at Dresden, got its finishing touch from Rembrandt through the addition of a cur.

Rembrandt used the back of a drawing of *The Entombment of Jesus* for the eternalization of an obscenity in his atelier. He had surprised one of his apprentices and a nude model in a not just academic pose.

That are only a few details of pictures, drawings and etchings, which each for itself does not prove Rembrandt's unbelief, but altogether they do not leave the least doubt about that he would have omitted them, if still a little bit heat would have been smouldering beneath the ashes of his early faith. Rembrandt knew that he would hurt the religious feelings of the simple people. It is therefore that I do not believe in his religiosity. Shall we call him irreligious? Where does non-religious end, and where does irreligious begin?

ALTERATION ABOUT 1635

Spinoza was not a beginning, no more was Rembrandt. In fact, there are no beginnings. What seems to be a beginning is always the transformation of something old, with a new name. Spinoza came from Descartes. His first publication was a survey of the philosophy of Descartes, but in the supplement to the survey it was already perceivable that Spinoza had begun to grow a large size above his master. Rembrandt in his youth vacillated between his love of realism, which in the second part of the sixteenth and the first part of the seventeenth century was only alive in portrait painting; and a slight unreasonable predilection for the pathetic and rhetoric style of the Italian and French masters. It is not possible to document Rembrandt's love of realism and his propensity to pathetic idealism, but we need no

testimonies in writing where factual evidences in plenty are on hand. His lust of reality can be proved by the number of portraits, painted in his early period in Leyden, portraits of his father, his mother, his brother Adriaen and other members of his family, besides several portraits of old men, who altogether did not lend themselves to heroization. Rembrandt's prejudices in respect of Italianizing art, which was the great vogue in Holland during the first decades of the seventeenth century, may be gathered from the choice of his masters, Jacob van Swanenburgh, Pieter Lastman, and Jan Pynas, and last not least from his partnership with Jan Lievens (1607-1674) with whom he opened a workshop at Leyden in 1629. Rembrandt's early biblical paintings, as far as they have come to us, were indeed not quite without theatricality. Constantine Huygens who visited Rembrandt between 1629 and 1631 praised Rembrandt's "affectuum vivacitas" (the vivacity of his affects) and he was serious about his appreciation, otherwise he would not have mediated, in 1631, the order from Prince Frederick Henry of Orange for five religious pictures: *Elevation of the Cross*, *Descent from the Cross*, *Entombment*, *Resurrection*, and *Ascension*. But Huygens could not keep from making a subdued remark on the occasional affect-edness of his affects. How can the contradiction of realism and idealism in Rembrandt be explained? It seems not impossible that Rembrandt was so obsessed by the reality of life that he found it necessary to accentuate and articulate, and thus to exaggerate, the emotions of his biblical figures, for the sake of a better visualization of the invisible for the public. Till he one day realized—maybe after Huygens had opened his eyes,—that this road would finally lead to a surreal or unreal world. From then on he tried to stress the reality by internalization, what up to then he had attempted at by externalization.

When the alteration took place? Nobody knows. But it must have been between 1632 and 1635. One of the first pictures in his new style was *The Sermon of John Baptist* (c.1635). In that year Rembrandt married Saskia van Uylenburgh and his marriage had made him financially independent. He could now afford to be himself.

Two of the five pictures ordered by Frederick Henry (*Entombment*, and *Resurrection*) were delivered in 1639. Rembrandt

enclosed a letter to Huygens in which he wrote, with a hint at Huygens' unfavorable remark on the occasion of his visit at Leyden: "Deese twee sijnt daer de meeste ende de naetureelste bewechelicheit in geopserveert is."¹⁷⁷ (these are the two in which the fullest and most natural emotions have been rendered. It is the most precious document we possess of Rembrandt and therefore it is utterly lamentable that F. Schmidt-Degener, the Director of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, has mistranslated the principal word "bewechelicheit." He translates the word by *motion*. Since motion is generally considered to be the main characteristic of "baroque" art, Schmidt-Degener drew the wrong conclusion that Rembrandt himself has called his art "baroque."¹⁷⁸

The *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal*, the highest authority in this field, confirms that, in the *seventeenth century*, "bewechelicheit" never meant "beweging" (motion):

"Bewegelijk" is

- A. the ability to emotionalize,
- B. 1) The ability of being moved or transposed (mobility of the jaw),
- 2) The quality of being alive in his actions, or of being subject to caprices or whims,
- 3) The quality of being emotional,
- 4) Emotion: "Joseph . . . makes every one shed tears and melt to water for emotion" ("beweegelijckheid"), Vondel; "That they had mastered their emotions so that . . .," De Wit in *Leven S. Geertr.*).

Schmidt-Degener explains in his article that Rembrandt "did not focus his chief attention on the emotion of the soul . . . but on the adequate representation of the visible functions of the living body . . . Rembrandt observed more the visible motions than the invisible emotions. The baroque proclaims that life is motion . . ."

A further disproof of Schmidt-Degener's translation is to be found in the book of Rembrandt's pupil Samuel van Hoogstraeten. He writes¹⁷⁹ that every painter excels in something particular: "Dürer painted the clothes so, that it looked as if they were cut out of one and the same material; Lucas van Leyden excels in moralizations; Rembrandt in painting the *passions of the mind*; and Goltzius in copying the style of one of the great masters."

In the chapter with the inscription: "On the passions and drifts of the soul," van Hoogstraeten explains the importance, especially for history painting, of visualizing the true and real "drifts of the soul."

Arnold Houbraeken,¹⁸⁰ who too knew Rembrandt personally, writes on Rembrandt's etchings and drawings: "Many hundreds of them are generally known to the amateurs, and about as many pen drawings which display the *passions of the soul* under all kind of circumstances in the expression of the faces so artistically, that we can only admire them. Anger, hatred, sadness, joy, and so on, are rendered so naturally that we can read from the strokes of the pen what each of them has to say." (*Italics mine*).

The text of Rembrandt's letter, in which he underscores that he has expressed the emotions of the figures (*Entombment* and *Resurrection*) in the most natural way, is besides an affirmation of Drost's remark that Rembrandt's work is completely devoid of "religious devotion." It is true Rembrandt used the word "natural" first of all in the sense of a negation of the unnatural (exaggeration, artificiality, theatricality) but also in the sense of a negation of the *supernatural*.

Before I can explain that and how Rembrandt's alteration was effective not only in figure painting, but especially in his portraits, I have to disclose Rembrandt's unique attitude to the totalness of time, and to the totalness of man.

RELATION TO TIME

All that exists, exists in time, in change, in a continuity of becoming. For all that we can *conceive* of a thing beyond time, and occasionally we may be obliged to abstract from time, but only provisionally. As soon as the abstraction has fulfilled its purpose, we must restore time, reconvert the ideational unreality into the original reality.

It is obvious that painting is confronted for reasons just mentioned with an almost unsolvable problem. A poet, an actor, a composer, a musician, a dancer, can represent things in change, because time is the form in which they conceive their works and the form in which the works of art when reproduced present

themselves to us. But the painter and the sculptor have no temporal form whatsoever at their disposal. They cannot represent a succession of moments but only one single moment. Does it follow from this that a painter will never be able to paint the full reality of life, in other words, that a painter can never be a realist?

Let us see how sixteenth and seventeenth century portrait painting has tackled this problem.

Change cannot be change unless there is an element in the changing thing that is not subject to change. For instance, when we say: Peter has changed, it means that the Peter of the present is no longer the Peter of the past. And yet he must be identical, otherwise we could not negate his identity, we could not maintain, that Peter has changed.

The Italian portrait painters about 1500 facing the unsoluble contradiction of a non-identical identity, used the old trick of Parmenides (b.515 B.C.) and Zeno (490-430 B.C.), who developed the contradictions for no purpose other than to exclude the contradictory. So the Italians decomposed man into a constant and a number of variables. They held the constant for the essential of man, and the variables, just because of their variability, for nonessential, for accessories which cannot impair man's essence. The constant of man is his timeless, unchangeable, predetermined *character*, the result of inborn proprieties rooted in organic constitution. The variables are the changing accidental forms in which the invariable character manifests itself.

Now we understand why so many of the Italian portraits about 1500 frighten us. They are not only timeless, but their timelessness has also made them spaceless. And the spectator involuntarily transfers the timelessness and the spacelessness of the style to the reality of the persons represented. They look outworldly. Their impassivity and impassibility make them gruesome. They are hard, cold, and opaque, even the women. We may accept these paintings as exquisite art, but they are unacceptable to us as portraits of human beings.

About 1550, absolutism became more and more prevalent in Western Europe. As I have explained, the central idea of these days: "absoluteness," is imaginable and representable in the art only in a negative sense, as a thing that can be increased or

extended infinitely without ever reaching the end. The main characteristic of the new art was, therefore, infinite motion, which necessarily implies the emphasis of time. The old portrait style which represented the *timeless* character of man did no longer fit into the absolutist world. So the artists represented in their portraits no longer the constant but began to stress more and more the variables, and the constant was, so to say, taken into the bargain as far as there cannot be variables without a constant. The variables were, of course, the affects, the emotions, life. But the artists depicted the affects not in their summation, in becoming, thus as a process; but as a sum. Herewith they invariabilized the variables. The summation of the affects would have been life, the sum of the affects is the end of life. The portraits from 1550 till 1750, however great works of art they may be, do not interest us particularly as portraits, because we are facing men, virtually without a past and without a future. The portraits are unrelated psychological statements without any reference to the why, the whence, and the whither. The portraits of the absolutist period are thus abstractions, as the portraits of the hyperindividual period from 1450 till 1550 were abstractions.

For the average of portrait painters of the Dutch school of the seventeenth century there were no problems, as there are no problems for the glass of a mirror or the lens of a camera. They just painted what presented itself to them and so as it presented itself. However Frans Hals (1581-1666) and Rembrandt (1606-1669) won't put up with the reduction of life to one single moment. They wanted to paint *life*. Frans Hals thought that a solution could be found by painting his models in action. An action would be the mobilization of the immobilized moment, an action is always a duration, however short this duration may be. Therefore Hals' figures, if ever possible, are doing something: talking, gesticulating, laughing, pouring wine or beer into glasses, clinking, drinking, singing, making music, beating the time with one of their hands, rocking on the hindlegs of their chair, playing with one or another object. But Hals failed. The result was not an action, but only the sudden interruption of an action, the immobilization of an action. He only *suggested* a continuation, he urged the spectators to continue there where he had left off in order to appropriate *their* continuation as *his* continuation.

In those of his portraits where the portrayed is not acting, but just resting, pausing, we get the feeling that the resting *continues*, that it is a resting with *duration*, a resting, thus, in time; in those pictures we are closer to life than in the portraits where just the breaking off of the action makes us so vividly aware that his whole action was make-believe.

Rembrandt did the opposite of what Hals tried. He painted his figures by preference without action. They are sitting, resting, meditating, waiting, keeping silence. When Rembrandt was obliged to show action as, for instance in the group portrait of Captain Banningh Cocq, because he was ordered to paint the marching-out of the troop, even there, it is as if he waited for a short moment that the bustle and the noise had calmed down for a while. Of course, he could not stop the marching, but at least nobody is speaking, not even the Captain. He *was* speaking, as his stretched out hand proves, but in the supreme moment he was so quiet that he even did not dare to break the stillness by moving his hand to rest.

The intention of Rembrandt is especially conspicuous in the *Anatomical Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*, and in the *Syndics*. In the first group portrait the surgeon interrupts his explanations for one or another reason which Rembrandt did not find worth while to make clear to us. And the meeting of the Syndics was interrupted by the unexpected entrance of some stranger into the board room. Here Rembrandt motivated the pause by the direction of the heads and the eyes of the guildmasters to the door.

The great difference between Frans Hals and Rembrandt was, that Hals saw every moment of time in its isolation. Time was for him a compound of single moments, each of which was an entity, each moment can be taken apart, as we can pick a pea out of a bag of peas, and we need no other peas, though they are all different, to get a complete idea of the pea in our hand. They do not interintegrate each other. For Rembrandt there are no single moments, there is solely time. The successive appearances of time are only occasional experiences of the time continuity.

It is not so easy for many of us to see the difference between Frans Hals and Rembrandt, because we have been educated to see only parts, and not the whole; we have been trained to

individunalize, which literally means, to divide and to subdivide every thing down to its last elements; we have been drilled into the belief that only a microscope can discover the soul of a thing, the sense of all that exists. Frans Hals sees only parts, for Rembrandt there are no moments, time is a whole with no parts. Moments are for Hals the beads of a necklace, time is for Rembrandt the invisible and indivisible string on which the beads have been threaded.

Another example will elucidate this further. Take the motion of the third guildmaster from the left on Rembrandt's group portrait of the *Syndics*. He rises from his chair while looking at the stranger who just makes his appearance in the hall. Frans Hals would have painted the guildmaster in a pose, which might leave us in doubt whether the man is rising from his seat or about to sit down again. Rembrandt does not paint a pose, an immobilized moment, but the whole action of rising from the beginning till the end. We see how the man *was* sitting, how he bent the upperpart of his body forwards, how he placed his feet in the proper position, how he was supporting his body with his hands. We see the tempo of his getting-up in conformity with his age, we see the precaution with which he prevents any disturbance of the gentlemen sitting on his sides. We know exactly how the motion will continue till he is completely erect.

One of the most subtle representations of time in its totalness is Rembrandt's pen drawing *Salvation of Moses* (1635/1640) of the Museum of Groningen. It is an illustration of the verses 5 and 6 of the second chapter of *Exodus*: "And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river: and her maidens walked along by the river's side: and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. And when she had opened it, she saw the child: and behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion in him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." What Rembrandt has made is not a snapshot, as most of his colleagues would have done, it is even more than a scene, it is a whole story, or rather three different stories of the three girls up to the unforgettable moment on the bank of the Nile. We have no details, but we know the girls so well, that no guessing is necessary how they would behave in other situations of life. This is what I call totalness of time, which only Rembrandt could

live and represent. And the greatest wonder of the pen drawing *Salvation of Moses* is that Rembrandt describes their lives in a few inchoate strokes of his pen.

Rembrandt's relation to time is one of the secrets of his unsurpassed ability to paint life.

RELATION TO MAN

We have seen that in the seventeenth century there were two theories of the essence of man. The dualists (Descartes) held that man consisted of two independent and mutually irreducible substances: body and soul. The monists (Spinoza), on the other hand, taught that man was an indecomposable whole, and that body and soul were one and the same thing.

It is of importance for the understanding of Rembrandt's portraits to know to which of the two views the painter inclined. It is clear that from a painter who had no philosophical ambitions whatsoever, we cannot expect an hypothesis or proposition entertained on rational grounds. But there can be no doubt that Rembrandt must have had a fundamental, protodoxic, natural attitude toward man's essence. The question, thus, is: Was Rembrandt at bottom a Cartesian or a Spinozist, or so far as there can be a question of Spinozism before Spinoza himself formulated and ventilated his theory.

Let us first discuss the supposition that Rembrandt was leaning to Descartes. If so, he must have believed in the independence of the soul, the invisible part of man; and at the same time in the independence of the body, the visible part. Invisible things cannot be painted unless they have visualized themselves in one or another way. It is self-evident that the soul can manifest itself solely in the body. So we may say, the soul shapes the body. On the ground of these "truths," Rembrandt is generally supposed to have been able to paint "the soul of man," and in an unsurpassed way, thanks to his exceptional power of observation, his sharp discernment of human nature, and, last but not least, his mastery of all the secrets of the technique of painting.

This setup can be found in all manuals of history of art, and it has been repeated so frequently that finally it has become an eternal truth. For all that, the whole setup is nonsense. It is

begging the question. It is a fallacy involving the assumption as premises of one or more propositions which are identical with the conclusion to be proved. If we boil down the whole argumentation, it amounts to this: the soul reveals the body, and the body reveals the soul. Thus nothing reveals anything.

Rembrandt's "soul painting" is only conceivable and explainable when we hold fast by the idea that Rembrandt saw man as a totalness in the same way, as he saw time as a totalness. Rembrandt did not divide time into a present and a past, and he did not try to explain the present by the past and the past by the present. It would be the same *petitio principii* as an explication of the interior of man by his exterior, and his exterior by his interior. Besides—and this is a point that should not be overlooked—it is wholly unacceptable that a man like Rembrandt could have been a totalist in his natural attitude toward *time*, and a dualist in his natural attitude toward *man*.

Rembrandt was even more of a totalist than Spinoza. The unity of body and soul was for Spinoza, strictly speaking, not a unity but only a synthesis. Once the unity of body and soul has fallen apart by eating from the tree of knowledge—as it was the case with Spinoza who got the apple from Descartes—the original unity can never more be restored. Rembrandt with his childlike unaffected simplicity, his untaught state of mind, was never contaminated by dualistic sophistications. Of course, he knew and used the vulgar terminology of his time with the words: action, passion, affect, drift, lust, etc. but they were for him just synonyms for the functions of man as a whole, just as love was for Shakespeare a function not of the body, nor of the soul, but a function of man as a totalness, in which he lives his being-for-himself (Sartre). A man who loves, desires to possess with his wholeness the wholeness of the object of his love. His spiritual possession is always, at the same time, sexual even when not consummated; as his sexual possession is always, at the same time, spiritual. His desire to possess involves necessarily his desire to be possessed by his partner, in fullest freedom, and in the same totalist manner as he desires to possess her. Therefore, sexual indifference of the man, or frigidity of the woman are nothing but the symptoms of the death of love, the sepulchral smell of which cannot be expelled by "platonic purifi-

cation and sublimation of love," "camaraderie," and other air-refreshers.

What was the attitude of Rembrandt's colleagues, the Dutch realists, toward the problem of the soul? Well, this problem did not give them any trouble whatsoever. What did they care for "soul painting?" They just wanted to copy what the face of man posing before them, momentarily showed, one time perhaps a glimpse of a character, another time a flash of a passion, or a shadow of a mood, or a snap of a caprice, or shimmer of a whim, or just the horrible emptiness of a haphazard moment of an empty life. The realists made it a point of honor to accomplish the replica of a face as minutely and precisely as possible, so that in case we should like to rummage in psychological particulars, it would even be redundant to analyze the portrayed himself, since the portrait of the man gives all the data and to spare. Psychology was none of the business of the realists.

PRE-COGNITIVE CONSCIOUSNESS

Man has two ways open to come into contact with the existing world:

- 1) the pre-cognitive approach,
- 2) the cognitive approach.

The pre-cognitive approach is the projection of his consciousness into the surrounding world. Herewith he makes the world which up to then had existed for itself, to *his* world, in the fullest sense of the word. I call this approach pre-cognitive because man has no knowledge of the world, he only *lives* it, without any problems, without any questions about the essence, the sense of the individual things, about time, space, death. He just accepts the reality as it presents itself to him, and his art can be nothing but the primitive statement of the reality.

The cognitive approach starts with reflecting on the what, the when, the where, the why, the whence, the whither of the things. The desire to know is already, what the Bible calls, the desire to take and to eat from the tree of knowledge and thus the beginning self-expulsion of man from the paradise of careless happiness. A return to the original state of purity is, of course, impossible.

For all that, there have always been exceptional men, mostly artists, who, from their childhood on, have lived the world so extensively and intensively that religious indoctrination, moral training, and school learnedness never obtained to stop or to distract their all pervading "life." We call them children, or savages. Rembrandt belonged to this category.

The cognitive approach can be subdivided into two classes. There is a cognitive approach that starts from the totalness of all that exists. Its instrument is intuition, and its method is synthetic. Besides, there is a cognitive approach that separates the totalness into parts and starts from the individual things. Its instrument is the intellect, its method is analytic, and the result knowledge.

We are immensely indebted to science for the improvement of human life here on earth. But science has apart from its great benefits a number of dangers. Our knowledge has considerably attenuated our living in the world. And yet all knowledge is based on "Erlebnisse." There could not be science at all without the previous penetration of our consciousness into the things. Life, therefore, is primary, science is secondary. Science is nothing but the determination and explanation of a world previously perceived and apprehended, thus "lived." Let me add a few examples for the sake of clarification. The re-experience of, let me say, an experience of Mozart crystallized in one or another composition, has often been substituted by the moral contentment with our learnedness, in the form of recognition. Listening to the first measures of the composition, we know immediately the key of the symphony, the number of "Köchels Verzeichnis," the year and the place of the origin of the work. Does not the so-called enjoyment of most of the art collectors consist of the awareness of their material, instead of the spiritual possession of the work? Is the price paid for the art message not more important to them than the contents of the message? Who has still time to enjoy flowers, preoccupied as we are with the classification and denomination of these things of beauty; and thrilled as we are with the name of the very expensive Fifth Avenue florist, where the present was bought? We have no idea how miserably poor we have become with all our knowledge and all our wealth.

The greatest asset of existentialism is, as Maurice Merleau-

ponty put it: "le désaveu de la science," in the sense of reinternalization and reintensification of life, what Husserl calls: "our reversion to the things themselves."

What Rembrandt and Spinoza have in common, is their living the world, the projection of their consciousness into the things. What distinguishes them, is Rembrandt's intuitive, and Spinoza's cognitive approach.

Which of the two is preferable? I should say, that for a painter the intuition with which he lives his world, will be of paramount importance; for a philosopher nothing can be more prolific than cognition.

FUNCTIONALISM IN COLORS, LIGHT, AND COMPOSITION

Rembrandt's alteration, about 1635, brought about a radical change in his style. As far as the content was concerned, Rembrandt began to reevaluate more and more the constituent parts of a portrait. As his letter of 1639 to Constantine Huygens proves, he was primarily interested in painting life, and life was for him emotions, actions and passions. The parallelism between Rembrandt and Spinoza is conspicuous. The contents of Spinoza's main work, the *Ethica*, dealt with the same subject: actions and passions. And both conceived of life dynamically. Spinoza was aware that absolute perfection never could be reached, so that striving at perfection meant a continuous beginning all over again; and Rembrandt's series of self-portraits—no other painter portrayed himself so often as Rembrandt did—demonstrates the same reaching after the absolute with the same awareness of its unreachableness. Rembrandt's insight that the life of man, or as he called it, the soul, was supervaluable, implied a devaluation of the things without a soul, without life, dead things. From 1635 on, Rembrandt did no longer give himself so much trouble in painting a piece of jewelry as meticulously as he painted an eye, the button of a coat as finically as a nose, a piece of point de Venice as scrupulously as the crows'-feet at the outer corners of the eyes. He even began to neglect more and more the textural values of silk, satin, velvet, linen, fur, etc. Life of man was for him the highest reality.

There are several choices open for an artist to differentiate

the more valuable elements of a portrait from the less valuable and the valueless ones. The most expressive parts of the body were, of course, the face (especially the eyes and the mouth) and the hands. Rembrandt's pupil Samuel Van Hoogstraeten writes,¹⁸¹ that the head is "the most important part, with which the motions of the soul [thus the emotions] can be rendered." We may assume that van Hoogstraeten only repeats what he has heard over and over again in the studio of his old master.

A radical means to carry out the differentiation between essentials and accessories may seem to be outlining or painting the head in detail and leave out the rest of the body and the fond completely, so that the head appears on the unprepared ground of the canvas or the paper. It seems to me, however, that this procedure is not effective at all. When the body has been left out, there is no norm for the establishment of the quantitative or qualitative elaboration of the head.

A better method would be to detail the face and go in for a merely sketchy treatment of the rest. This method may be permissible in drawings, etchings, lithographs, where the head is already unrealistic through the omission of colors and the reduction of the form into lines. In painting, however, the translucidity of the realistically painted parts would stand up too sharply from the murky opacity of the summarily represented rest.

Rembrandt found "the" solution of the problem. He just bundled his light and cast the beam on the head, and sometimes on the head and the hands, leaving the rest in the dark. Now, the disbalance of the whole could not disturb or upset the onlooker, because the details of the clothes and the background *were* there, only the spectator could not see them because of the unequally spread light.

In many manuals of art history, we find the gratuitous assumption that Rembrandt took over the chiaroscuro from the Italians. It is true that the Italian painters, for instance, Correggio (1489?-1534) and Caravaggio (1569-1609) preceded. But that is all there is to it. The Italian chiaroscuro cannot be compared with Rembrandt's. In the south it was many times just playing with light; on other occasions, it was the lust to overwhelm the public by the hard contrast of light and dark; very

often it was an attempt to make scenes look like ghostly apparitions, or transform scenes into visions, ecstasies, or hallucinations. In Rembrandt's *Supper at Emmaus* of the Louvre at Paris, the light was calculated to produce stagey effects. In his portraits, however, Rembrandt's light was never theatrical. What Rembrandt intended with his light has been disclosed by Joachim von Sandrart,¹⁸² a German painter who lived for four years (1648-1652)—thus in the time when Rembrandt was trying to bring his new light technique to perfection—in Amsterdam where he knew Rembrandt personally. He writes: "In seinem Werke liesze unser Künstler wenig liecht sehen, auszen an dem fürnehmsten Ort seines Intents," in other words, Rembrandt bundled his light and used it to accentuate those parts of the body that were for him of paramount importance.

Although herewith Rembrandt's light problem was completely solved, the art historians have continued to repeat the romantic phantasies which originated in the course of the nineteenth century. The Rembrandt expert, Carl Neumann, for instance writes:¹⁸³ "Rembrandt opposes his light as a metaphysical element to the physical and material light of this world. His light is an irrational, divine power, which struggles with the dark in which all beings are involved. His light is something magical-supernatural, which breaks through the common dark reality. His light is magic, and its beam in Rembrandt's hand the wand with which he changes the world and brings it into being . . . His chiaroscuro is the mystical process of the incarnation and materialization of this light." And as late as 1942, Henri Focillon twaddles:¹⁸⁴ "Rembrandt knew . . . that he must make a veritable Apocalypse of light blaze from the depths of the ghetto, as sun grappling with shadow in dark cellars that were filled with prophecy. Even as he stands in the very midst of this profane and vibrant world—a world that was jealously closed off and yet crowded with wanderers—Rembrandt places himself outside Holland and outside of time . . . creates a landscape, a light, and a humanity that are of course Holland, but withal a supernatural Holland."

Rembrandt's light was not "metaphysical," not "irrational," not "divine," not "magical," not "supernatural," not "mystical," not "apocalyptic," and not "prophetical." It was just plain,

natural light, but the ray, the angle, the intensity, and the color were used for definite purposes depending on the face that was to be illuminated. Rembrandt's light was *functional*.

In the thirties of the seventeenth century Rembrandt changed also his composition. Herewith he distanced himself farther and farther from the Dutch formalists who were so mightily impressed by the decorative compositional schemes of the Italians; and from the Dutch realists who did not bother about composition at all. They just copied the Dutch reality as it presented itself to them, and painted the scenes of their own invention, *as if* they had found them so in life, thus in a natural, casual, and informal arrangement. Their only contribution (re composition) was the determination of their stationpoint and the determination of the picture limits, which were altogether of so little consequence as not to deserve the name of composition.

The novelty of Rembrandt's composition was that it was for the first time an arrangement grown with necessity out of the scene, and not a scene pressed into an already existing compositional form. In no field Rembrandt made it so clear that he would not be dictated to, no field in which he showed his Dutch stubbornness, his indomitable lust of freedom, and his determination to be himself to such an extent, as in the field of composition. The description of Rembrandt by Joachim von Sandrart in his *Teutsche Academie*¹⁸⁵ is striking. It was meant, of course, as a vilification, but what Sandrart upholds as defects of Rembrandt's character, were, in fact, his greatest assets, which have made him immortal. Sandrart writes: "Rembrandt did not hesitate to oppose and contradict our aesthetic laws, such as anatomy and the proportions of the human body, perspective, besides the usefulness of studying classic statues, Raphael's art of drawing and Raphael's compositions ["vernünftige Ausbildungen"], and finally Rembrandt contradicted the academies although they are indispensable to our profession; in doing so he alleged that we should stick only and alone to Nature and to no other maxims." Rembrandt contradicted the academies not only in tirades but in actions: already in Leyden, and later in Amsterdam he refused to become a member of the St. Luke Guild, to which all painters belonged. The characterization of Rembrandt's lust of freedom by Sandrart is in conformity with what we know about the great

master from his pupil Samuel van Hoogstraeten and Arnold Houbraken, and particularly from himself. His slogan was: "Als ick myn geest uytspanninghe wil geven, dan is het niet eer die ick zoek, maer vryheit" ("My highest inner satisfaction is not to be praised but to be free").

It will be manifest that also in this respect Rembrandt agreed with Spinoza. Both wanted to be free, and both understood by freedom the same thing: being themselves.

I shall now have to substantiate my statements about Rembrandt's composition and analyze three group portraits: one of his earliest period, the *Anatomical Lesson of Dr. Tulp* (1632) of the Mauritshuis in the Hague; one of the period in which Rembrandt had reached his fullest maturity, the so-called *Night-watch* (1642) in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam; and one of his last period, the *Syndics* (1662) of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam.

The main data for the *Anatomical Lesson of Dr. Tulp* were, first of all, the size of the canvas which depended on the measurements of the wall, on which the picture was destined to be hung. Of importance was further the natural source of light in the room, because the angle of light in the picture had to correspond to the angle of light in reality. Rembrandt was further bound to a certain number of persons to be portrayed. They were altogether eight. Furthermore, an anatomy would not be an anatomy without a cadaver. And a lesson would not be a lesson without the clear distinction between teacher and students.

In the field of surgery Holland (and England as second) was leading in the seventeenth century. Holland was called everywhere "de snykaemer van Europy" (the operating-room of Europe). Dr. Tulp (1593-1674) was by far the greatest surgeon of Amsterdam and enjoyed even an European reputation. His standard work *Observationes medicae*, published in 1640, had five editions (1652, 1673, 1685, 1716).

Therefore the celebrity of the great Nicolaes Tulp would not be sufficiently expressed by just painting him with his hat on his head, whereas the students had to attend the lecture bare-headed; the superiority of Dr. Tulp had to be visualized also in the composition.

Another material factor was the operating room which, on

the picture had to be a room with only three walls, just as the space of the stage. It was thus an open space. The imaginary space of the picture found its extension into the real space of the public before the picture. In the real operating-room, the students would stand *around* the cadaver. Rembrandt could not take over this natural arrangement, because the body would not have been visible then, and a part of the students who were standing with their back to the spectators could hardly be made recognizable. It had to be a group *portrait*, because the likeness of each member of the group had been paid for.

All these problems were solved by Rembrandt in a really ingenious way. He did it by means of his twodimensional composition (the way how the eight men and the cadaver filled the plane of the canvas), and by means of his tridimensional composition (the arrangement of the figures on the imaginary ground-plane of the imaginary picture space).

First a few words on the twodimensional composition.

Rembrandt divided the canvas approximately into two halves. The right half was destined for Dr. Tulp alone, the left half was reserved for the seven students. The painter, thus, made a clean separation between the teacher and his audience. But that was not enough. He wanted to visualize not only that the intelligence, the ability, and the experience of Dr. Tulp was greater than those of each of the students, but also that Tulp's giftedness balanced the total of intelligences and the other qualities of the seven students. He did this by creating around Dr. Tulp a big space. The dark part to the right of Dr. Tulp is, consequently, no dead space, as it might seem on first sight, disturbing the equilibrium of the whole, but the darkness around Tulp had an hypertensic power.

No Italian artist would have dared to build up a group of eight persons so that about a third of the whole canvas was so good as unused; and eight persons were crammed into the remaining two thirds. An Italian even might have wondered whether it would not be better to remove the empty third of the picture entirely. How can so much room go to waste? From a *decorative* standpoint the man may be right. But what did Rembrandt care for decoration, for aesthetic considerations? For him there were other values at stake. He knew that the quanti-

tative equilibrium was disturbed by painting the group as he did, but that was just what he positively willed, because the qualitative equilibrium, in other words, the prominence of the master surgeon, could otherwise not be brought to the fore so emphatically.

The position of the cadaver is in the diagonal. On purpose? Of course. If the corpse should have been placed horizontally, parallel to the lower edge of the picture, the seven students would not have had place enough. And it would not have been possible to visualize the spiritual distance between Dr. Tulp and the rest.

For another thing. Rembrandt arranged deliberately the left half of his composition so that the seven heads of the students formed the following scheme:



The three dotted lines meet in \oplus , and so center the attention of the audience to the corpse. One of the heads \odot breaks the regularity of the scheme, in order not to distemper the observer by too great a pedantry. Goethe would say: "Man merkt die Absicht und wird verstimmt." The composition now looks accidental, and thus natural. For the same purpose Rembrandt divided his canvas into not exactly equal halves, the left half is somewhat greater than the right one.

The tridimensional composition of the picture reinforces what Rembrandt has already reached with his twodimensional arrangement: the articulation of the apartness, and the greatness of Dr. Tulp. Draw a square which has to represent the groundplan of the operating room. Outline within the square the cadaver in its diagonal position. The shoulders of the corpse will mark the other diagonal of the square. The grouping of the figures now is so, that all the students find place on one side of the second diagonal, and Dr. Tulp "in splendid isolation" on the other side of the diagonal line.

This is a typical Rembrandt composition, not construed for the sake of beauty, but a composition which has to say some-

thing definite, what could be said only by means of geometrical forms.

The functional composition of Rembrandt's *Nightwatch*, is much more complicated than the composition of the *Anatomical Lesson of Dr. Tulp*, and not easy to explain since what the Rijksmuseum presents us as the *Nightwatch* is, in fact, only a ruin of the original work.

The order to paint the group portrait was given in 1642. The occasion was the commission of Francis Banningh Cocq to Captain of the Company of Civic Guards of the Kloveniersdoelen at Amsterdam. But why do we call this work by the silly name of *Nightwatch*? It is neither a night, nor a watch. Rembrandt painted the group in full sunlight, which in the cavernously narrow streets of Amsterdam with the high houses on both sides, could not but produce hard cast-shadows. Apart from this, the Hollanders of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have made the picture still more nocturnal by smearing over the paint, every time when the varnish had dried up, a new layer of gallery-varnish without removing the old varnish with the dirt. Small wonder that French and English visitors, among others the English painter Josuah Reynolds,¹⁸⁶ called it a "Ronde de Nuit" or "Nightwatch." And it is still called so, although the restoration in 1946-1947 has changed the night into day.

What the real title is, may be gathered from an album which was in possession of Frans Banningh Cocq himself. He had a little sketch made of the picture and he inscribed it in his own handwriting: "Schets van de Schilderije op de groote sael van de Cloveniers-Doelen, daerinne de Jonge Heer van Purmerlandt als Capiteyn geeft last aen zijnen Lieutenant, de Heer van Vlaerdingen, om zyn Compagnie Burgers te doen marcheren" (Sketch of the picture in the big hall of the Civic Guard Building, on which the young Lord of Purmerlandt [a title Banningh Cocq had arrogated to himself in his capacity of son-in-law of the *old* Lord of Purmerlandt, Volkert Overlander] as Captain, orders his Lieutenant, the Lord of Vlaerdingen, to march out his Company of Burghers)¹⁸⁷ The proper name of the group portrait should, therefore, be: *Banningh Cocq and his Company*, as we shall call it henceforth.

The badge by which the Captain used to be distinguished on

the Dutch "Schuttersstukken" was a walking-stick in over-life-size. The Lieutenant used to wear a spontoon. The flag-bearer was represented with the unfurled flag in his hand. The sergeants were armed with halberds, and the men with arquebuses or pikes. With the exception of the Captain and the Lieutenant, we are not interested in the sixteen names, listed on a shield on a pillar in the background, because they cannot contribute whatsoever to the sense of Rembrandt's work, in other words, the names have nothing to do with history *of* art, but only with history *around* art, to which art history has been degraded nowadays.

The picture remained in the Kloveniers Doelen till the year 1715. The building was then to be pulled down, and the magistrates of Amsterdam found the best solution of the housing-problem to move the picture to the Town Hall on the Dam in Amsterdam. Unfortunately the wall there proved to be too small, but the burgomasters were not at their wit's end. They cut off a considerable piece of the lower part, a small strip of the upper part, a few inches of the right side, and a big piece of the left side with a few figures and the continuation of the architecture of the background. The original size was 387x502 cm, according to Hofstede de Groot. The present size is 365x438 cm. The amputated parts were thrown away.

How do we know the extent of the mutilation? About 1649, Francis Banningh Cocq had ordered a mediocre painter with the name of Gerrit Lundens Bzn to copy the original work of Rembrandt in a reduced size (66x83 cm.) for his home. We may gather from this how much pleased the Captain was with Rembrandt's work. After Banningh's death, the copy remained in possession of the family Banningh Cocq till, at the end of the seventeenth century, the Lundens' copy came under the auctioneer's hammer. We do not know who bought the copy, nor do we know anything about its further abode till, in the nineteenth century, it turned up again and came into possession of the National Gallery in London, where it is still exhibited.

Let us first examine the results of the amputation of the lower part of the picture. In order to feel not so much the unaesthetic as well as the unlogic of the treatment of Rembrandt's space, we need only to tear a printed page out of a book and

cut off the white margin at the bottom. The margins of the three remaining sides have lost their sense. The group was formerly (thus, before the mutilation) rising from the ground. Now we get the impression as if it is slowly sagging into the ground. A similar gloominess we experience when standing before the cathedral of Notre Dame at Paris. Since the place before the church has been raised to prevent its overflowing by the Seine, it is now as if the cathedral has grown so old and tired that it is sagging down and turning into another "cathédrale ensevelie."

For another thing. The shortening of the foreground was a ruthless attack on Rembrandt's space. We all know what space meant to Rembrandt. Think of his *Simeon in the Temple* (1631) of the Mauritshuis in the Hague. It is a relatively small work. Nevertheless Rembrandt chose his viewpoint as far as possible from the holy scene. He diminished the size of the group to the utmost, in order to gain a profusion of temple space. He needed the immense space to make us feel the mystery of the scene. An enlargement of the figures would have reduced the space. Take a reproduction of the *Simeon in the Temple* and cover the surrounding so that only the group is visible, and put beside it another reproduction with the full space; then we shall be able to realize how Rembrandt played with space like a god.

Another example is the *Supper at Emmaus* (1648) of the Louvre at Paris. Here again the space is in no relation to the group. Besides Rembrandt knew that in the village of Emmaus there was no inn with the space he needed, as there was in Jerusalem no temple with the dizzy height he wanted for his *Presentation*. What did he care? If there was no space, he created space.

In his anatomies and his other group portraits Rembrandt could not be so prodigal with space as he was in his Biblical scenes. The space in *Banningh Cocq and his Company* was not his space. It was the space of the Company. The soldiers had paid for it. How would they have scolded if the painter had not spent the whole available space for them, if he had saved space at their expense. It is already very surprising that the surgeons of Dr. Tulp accepted the picture with all the empty space and all the darkness around the master surgeon.

In *Banningh Cocq and his Company*, Rembrandt had to the convenience of his patrons already saved space in an almost stingy way. And now the magistrature of Amsterdam dared to chop off the little foreground that remained. His chief work was herewith sillified. A large group with no space enough to breathe, leave alone to move. The Captain and the Lieutenant come stepping up with tremendous strides without being able to move a foot. A group of soldiers presses itself forcibly through the lock-gates of the Doelen, rolling on in rows of waves, without any space to legitimate this pressure and urgency.

There is worse to come. The space, in which Rembrandt has placed his figures is an imaginary, a twodimensional space, and thus no real space. The space in which the spectators are standing before the picture, is tridimensional, thus a real space. Even a child can understand that we, with our three dimensions, can never enter the twodimensional space of the company. If some one should be so stupid (or so drunk) as to try it, the result would be only a destruction of the canvas. But, conversely, the Captain or the Lieutenant, or one of the soldiers of the company, can never step out of the imaginary space and march into our real space. Now, by chopping off the foreground, the following thing has happened. The left arm of the gesticulating Captain and the point of the spontoon of the Lieutenant reach beyond the twodimensional space of the picture, and, although twodimensional, press into our tridimensional space. The wonder of Joshua who just stopped the course of the sun because he needed a couple of hours more to mop up the battlefield, is nothing compared with the miracle of Banningh Cocq's hand and the Lieutenant's spontoon. If Rembrandt should have lived to see the bungling and botching of his fellow countrymen with his work, the greatest treasure of the whole Dutch art, I think that he would have cut his *Banningh Cocq and his Company* to pieces, as he did with his *Claudius Civilis* (1661), to prevent them from laying their stupidities at his door. This vandalism took place in 1715. About 235 years have passed since then, and in all these years no historian of art has ever explained the mischief caused by the destruction of the foreground of Rembrandt's chief work.

What about the mutilation of the sides of the picture? As I have said, only a few inches were amputated from the right

side; the left side, however, suffered the serious loss of a couple of figures.

In the original *Banningh Cocq and his Company*, the navel of the Captain was the center of the composition, as the navel of Buddha is the center of the world. The cut at the left of the canvas brought to pass that the Captain was no longer standing in the middle, he had moved to the left. As the picture works now, there is no longer one, but two principal persons, the Captain *and* the Lieutenant. The composition was adulterated.

The result was that a number of art historians lost their orientation. Charles Blanc, for instance, brought up the theory that not the Captain alone, but the Captain *and* the Lieutenant were the center of gravity of the whole. And Carl Neumann¹⁸⁸ went even so far as to assert: "Rein künstlerisch betrachtet ist der Hauptmann um des Leutnants willen da—dieser wurde des Malers 'enfant gâté' . . . seine Hauptfigur" (From a purely artistic point of view, the Captain is there only for the sake of the Lieutenant . . . The latter is the pampered child of the painter . . . his principal figure).

Charles Blanc was mistaken, and Carl Neumann was mistaken. The following historical facts alone should have made them doubt. The group portrait was ordered in remembrance of the "world shaking" event of Francis Banningh's commission to Captain of the Civic Guards. Rembrandt could not have in mind but the glorification of the Captain, and the Captain alone. And this was also the way how Banningh Cocq was looking at it and did take it. He was, as we shall see later, an utterly vain man. The fact that he had a sketch made of the picture for his album, and besides a copy in oil for his living room, are undeniable proofs that Rembrandt had satisfied him. Would not the Captain have been embittered, if Rembrandt had tried to put an subaltern officer of the company into the full limelight, and himself, the big Banningh Cocq, into the shadow?

Apart from these considerations it can be proved mathematically by means of the composition of the picture, what the intention of the artist was. The compositional structure, the so to say skeleton of Rembrandt's composition, can be best visualized in the following way. In my classes I have the slide of *Banningh Cocq and his Company* projected not on the screen, but on the

blackboard. It is then very easy to outline with chalk the contour of the Captain and the compositional lines on both sides of the central figure: the Captain's walking-stick, the flag-staff of the color-sergeant, the barrels of the arquebuses, the spontoon of the Lieutenant, the pike over the whole right half of the canvas, and so on, and so on. After switching on the light, the picture with all the details have disappeared and nothing but the silhouette of the Captain and the compositional frame work become visible. It will then be manifest that all the lines on both sides of the central figure run to the middle of the picture. It can be expressed also in this way: that all compositional lines start from the figure of the Captain, like rays, and spread on both sides to demonstrate the overwhelming and exclusive superiority of Francis Banningh Cocq.

Some one might object that it never can be proved that these compositional lines were willed, how ever likely their purposiveness may seem to be. It *can* be proved, because Rembrandt has done with his colors exactly the same he did with his lines.

The Captain is dressed in black. He could not wear something else than black, because it was the official color of the state dress of the regents of Holland. Francis Banningh Cocq belonged to this clique through the marriage of his father, as we shall see later. Rembrandt was thus committed to a black color in the center of the picture. On the left side of the Captain we see the Lieutenant in a brilliant and bright yellow. On the right side of the Captain we discover two little girls in silk gowns of the same yellow.

How have we to explain the presence of two girls in the bustle of the troops? Hundreds of articles have been written on this subject. One author suggested that they are the daughters of one of the officers, for instance, of the lieutenant. Hence the same color. G. Glück suggested that the two girls were dwarfs who served as sutlers. Others (Vosmaer and Schmidt-Degener) asserted that they were the daughters of the canteen boss. Vosmaer pointed to the slaughtered cock hanging from the belt of one of the children, and surmised that the cock could not but be the prize for the best marksman. I should like to know, how a company of soldiers can arrange a shooting-match with a walking-

stick, a spontoon, a few halberds, and a collection of pikes? There were only three gunmen in the whole company. And besides it is just unthinkable that a Hollander would send his daughters in long silk gowns to the butcher, and without a basket? And what Dutch butcher would be so thoughtless as to tie a killed cock, *unwrapped* to the belt of a girl in a silk dress? Besides, one of the girls is carrying in her hands a helmet? Does a girl need a helmet on the poultry market?

The reason for the presence of the two children is "simple *comme bonjour*." Rembrandt needed exactly on the place a yellow spot as a counter-weight to the yellow of the Lieutenant. It was not possible to dress up one of the pikers or the sergeants in yellow. The lieutenant would have been infuriated if one of the men of lower rank would appear in *his* yellow and steal the show. But he could not have any objection to the children wearing his color. *They* could not eclipse the rich Lord of Vlaerdingen.

As yet only the color and the location of the color have been explained. What now about the attributes: girls, cock, and helmet? The cock was the talking heraldic figure of Captain Cocq, as W. Martin already found out. But herewith is the riddle of the girls not yet solved. They cannot be something else than the supporters of the coat of arms of Cocq. Every coat of arms is crowned by a crown or a helmet. The Lord of Purmerlandt was not entitled to wear a crown, but as an emblem of the lowest rank of paper nobility, he was allowed to put a helmet on his escutcheon. Rembrandt could not paint Banningh Cocq's coat of arms with all its appurtenances on the facade of the Kloveniers Doelen in the background, as we often come across a coat of arms on the wall of the room of the portrayed. Therefore, Rembrandt made out of the constituent emblems of Cocq's nobility a living still life, which he arranged in the middle of the company as a salute to the great man.

Rembrandt had, thus, flanked the black of the central figure by the yellow of the Lieutenant, and the yellow of the girls. The premeditation of this color arrangement becomes still more evident, when we see that the arquebusier on the side of the lieutenant, as well as the arquebusier next to the girls, are sporting a blazing red. The rest of the picture shows dark colors with a greenish-gold-tonality. The color scheme of the whole is:

dark colors | red | yellow | BLACK | yellow | red | dark colors

Rembrandt, did thus, the same with his colors as he did with the lines of his composition: he again centralized and accentuated the figure of the Captain.

Not only the symmetry of the colors, but the choice of the color is significant: the black in the center ignites on both sides into a flaming yellow, which passes into a blazing red, to die down at last into the dark glow of the rest of the group.

During the seventeenth century, the painters and sculptors used to surround the figures of saints by a mandorla, a kind of elliptic halo that enveloped not the head alone but the whole of the body. The mandorla was represented by golden rays of light (symbolizing the light, thus, the glory of heaven) or by realistically painted *red* and *yellow* flames. Rembrandt used the same red and yellow for the apotheosis of the Captain, whose highest glory was, in 1642, his company. In the same way as the sculptors and painters of this period symbolized the glory of the Madonna by an emanation of heavenly light, so Rembrandt constructed out of the bodies of the soldiers a magnificent mandorla for the glorification of their commander.

Now we understand why Rembrandt could not content himself with the relatively few civic guards who had paid one hundred guilders each for the honor of their eternalization. The mandorla would have been too cheap, too shabby with so small a number. He, therefore, more than doubled it (34 instead of 16), although he did not get paid by the eighteen others. He was obliged to do so, because otherwise the monumental surrounding would not be as Francis Banningh Cocq expected from him.

In view of these facts, the group portrait gets quite another sense than the historians of art have up to now supposed it to have. On closer inspection *Banningh Cocq and his Company* is not a portrait of a group, but the portrait of a single man. In normal circumstances Rembrandt would have surrounded the man as he did, for instance, on the portrait of *Burgomaster Jan Six* (1654) of the collection of the family Six in Amsterdam, with pieces of furniture, books, pictures, curtains, etc. to create a dignified and suitable milieu. In this exceptional case, he created

a milieu consisting of soldiers, who interested him solely for so far as they were the staffage of the great Banningh Cocq. Small wonder that the civic guards who had paid their share of one hundred guilders each were disappointed when they saw the accomplished picture. Some of them had only the half of a face, others were hardly recognizable.

We have seen now, how Rembrandt has used all means he had at his disposal to glorify Banningh Cocq, and we cannot but assume that this man must have been an exceptional personality to justify this enormous fuss: the grandiose geometrical partition of the surface of the canvas by flashing lines; the collation of all the different forms into one monumental well-rounded closedness of which Banningh was the center, and from which this man again freed and elevated himself far above it; this wealth of colors and colors; and finally that daring play with light.

We have the feeling that, for the disclosure of the sense of this work, it is indispensable to know who this Banningh Cocq was. Neumann in his Rembrandt work presents us with a survey of the life of this typical Hollander. Cocq's father came from Bremen to Amsterdam as a beggar. "*Ostiatim mendicasse dicitur*" (he was told to have begged alms from door to door). At last he got a job with a druggist, named Banningh. The first thing to do was to engineer a secret love affair with the daughter of the wealthy druggist. And he married her, although the marriage was not at all to the liking of the parents of the bride. The child that was born, got the name of Francis. It was soon apparent that the youngster was not second to his father in carving his way. The name Cocq was, of course, an obstacle. So Francis called himself Banningh Cocq after his maternal grandfather, in order to dim out as much as possible his unglorious proper name of Cocq. Francis enjoyed a princely education. He did not go to school, where he should have to sit on one bench with "ordinary" children. No, the grandson of the rich Banningh, was taught at home by a governor. After his graduation, he made, accompanied by his governor, the "grand tour," which in other countries only sons of the high nobility could afford. He traveled through France, Italy, and Germany, and availed himself of his transitory abode in Italy to take his

doctor degree. His dissertation has not come to us. Probably it was just a check with a big figure on the Bank of Amsterdam.

Francis married the daughter of one of the richest regent families, Marie Overlander. Her father Volckert Overlander was a former burgomaster of Amsterdam and had bought the manor of Purmerlandt, in the first place, as an investment; in the second place, for the sake of the title. After Dr. Francis Banningh Cocq was married to Marie Overlander, he felt justified to bear the title of his father-in-law. Volckert Overlander was called the old Lord, Francis the "young" Lord of Purmerlandt. See his inscription in the family album. The acquisition of the manor of Ilpendam was another curl in the tail of his name. In 1634, he became a member of the Amsterdam City Council; and, in 1637, he was appointed to alderman. In 1642, Dr. Frans Banningh Cocq was commissioned as Captain of the Kloveniers Doelen Guards; in 1646, he advanced to Lieutenant-Colonel; in 1648, he bought (?) the French nobility from the King of France; and, in 1650, he was elected burgomaster of Amsterdam. He died, alack-a-day, in 1655, as Burgomaster Lieutenant-Colonel Dr. Francis Banningh Cocq, Lord of Purmerlandt and Ilpendam, Knight of the Order of St. Michael. It would have been interesting to know what he would have further devised to make himself still more illustrious.

We had many occasions to get acquainted with the different sides of Rembrandt's character. I think, his pupil Kheil, who was eight years together with Rembrandt, must have known him better than the others. Kheil characterized Rembrandt in two words: "Depressava tutti" (He did not care for whomsoever, he disregarded every one). Think of his reception of the hereditary Prince Cosimo who later became the Grand Duke Cosimo III de' Medici; of his behavior toward his superiors, his patrons, and his colleagues. Joachim Sandrart¹⁸⁹ regretted that "he did not know in the least how to keep his station and that he always associated with the lower orders." Houbraken¹⁹⁰ relates that "in the autumn of his life Rembrandt kept company mostly with common people and such as practiced wit." Before his marriage with Saskia van Uylenburgh, Rembrandt was still rather manageable, flexible, sometimes even prepared to compromise. After his marriage, or rather, since he felt himself financially independent,

he became irreconcilable, hard, stubborn, often insulting. He was so proud of his freedom that he blew up even at the thought that his freedom could be infringed on. In view of all this, we wonder, what made Rembrandt think of painting a booby as Francis Banningh Cocq. He was the incarnation of the swollen upstart, who needed a goatee to look a little bit manly; who did not know what to do with the six feet he stood; who could not but suffer from an inferiority complex, aware as he must have been of the disbalance between his oversize brawn and his undersize brains. Look at his fishy eyes, at the explicative gesture of his flabby hand. Is that a commanding officer? Of course, we do not know what he is talking about, but from the whole countenance of the man we may gather that it was just blab-blab. And then his Lieutenant, a midget with a sheep's head. He nearly tears the seat of his flamboyant yellow pants apart in order to keep step with the long strides of the overtall Captain. What a pitiful set!

It is unthinkable that Rembrandt could have found something attractive in Banningh Cocq. Might he have been tempted by the 1600 guilders? Most unlikely! The only acceptable motive, why Rembrandt was prepared to paint him, was "méchanceté" (roguishness).

Francis Banningh Cocq was the greatest common divisor of the Dutch regents of the seventeenth century. What the regents were, I have shortly explained in the chapter on Morale. Rembrandt, of course, knew them. And we may assume, for so far as we know him, that he must have hated them. Were it only because there was in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries no country that treated its great men in a more shameful way than the Hollanders did. It began with Erasmus (1466?-1536). He fled to Basel, in 1501, where he lived until his death, without ever more setting foot in Holland. "Ginds verachten mij die botteriken en onwetenden" (The block heads and simpletons down there contempt me), he assured one day. The treatments of Oldenbarnevelt, Hugo de Groot, Jan and Cornelis de Witt, Spinoza, have already been mentioned. Joost van den Vondel, supposedly Holland's greatest poet, had on the age of seventy no more means of subsistence. The burgomasters of Amsterdam gave him the job of a clerk in a pawnshop, where he worked till he had passed the age of eighty. It will not be necessary to

repeat what I have said about the starvation of the great Dutch realists. Rembrandt saw in Banningh Cocq the representative of the ruling class of his country. I can imagine the pleasure of Rembrandt when he got the order to paint Banningh Cocq. He did what he could to bring into relief the inflated emptiness of this incarnation of Holland's seventeenth century. And he did not need to caricature him. Banningh Cocq was already a caricature for himself.

The third example of a functional composition is Rembrandt's *Syndics* of the year 1662. The data were the following. In the first place, the measurements of the canvas (185x274 cm.), and the angle of the light, were conditioned by the wall in the Drapers Hall with a high window on the left. The number of persons to be portrayed were altogether six: five guildmasters and the caretaker. The background with brown wainscot and a projecting fire place with mantel-piece will likewise have been requested by the patrons. The Syndics had, of course, to be painted in their Sunday best, which was black. The enormous hats they are wearing as a characteristic mark of their prominence, in contradistinction to the caretaker, who had to be bare-headed in the presence of the gentlemen, are equally black. All that black was made still blacker by the white linen collars. The only living color in this dead world of black, white, and brown, was the red of a Persian table rug. As for the obligatory color palette, the group was rather thankless, especially for a painter who liked to luxuriate in colors. Therefore it is most likely, that the cochineal red was an extra of Rembrandt.

The composition was rather intricate. Rembrandt had to demonstrate the equivalence of the five syndics who took the chair by rotation, but he could not make an arrangement of the five men sitting side by side. It would look like waxwork figures. Frans Hals did so, for instance with the *Regentessen van het Oude Mannenhuis* (1664) of the Frans Halsmuseum in Harlem. The only thing that binds the ladies of Frans Hals together is the dull and slow box-like room, in which they are assembled, each living for herself her own little life, each thinking her own little things, each cuddling the little lapdog of her own little sentiments. Frans Hals' group portrait is a side-by-side, not a together. Frankly speaking, it is no group portrait but

just a collection of six single portraits on one canvas and in one frame. Rembrandt had to take into account, as I have already mentioned, the equivalence of the five members of the board, and the unworthiness of the servant. The equivalence of the syndics would require one row, the concierge, as a matter of fact, had to stay, for the same reason why he had to be bare-headed. And besides, his place should be behind the syndics. So the caretaker had to be shoved in, either between the second and the third syndic

.
.

or between the third and the fourth syndic

.
.

with the result that the triangle which herewith came into existence, transplacated the center of gravity to the respective side. In order to neutralize the triangle with the caretaker at the top, Rembrandt constructed another triangle upside-down at the other side of the president, by having the second syndic from the left rise from his seat. The action of rising could be easily motivated by some one of importance unexpectedly entering into the room. All the syndics but one are looking in the direction of the intruder. Through this second triangle the center of gravity of the picture shifted to the left and now the figure of the president ranked before all.

The disadvantage, however, was that, at first glance, the rising man seemed to belong to the back row, his head was in one line with the head of the caretaker. But the tridimensional composition—the five syndics side by side in the first row—corrected immediately the semblance of degradation of the second gentleman from the left, and the optical illusion which the twodimensional composition might cause. The picture shows the following geometrical scheme.

It is self-evident that Rembrandt slightly modified the distances between the six points of the basic geometrical form, to obscure its regularity and give it the semblance of a natural and casual arrangement. He has certainly succeeded, because no

art historian has as yet discovered the scheme. It was, thus, a composition grown with necessity out of the contents of the picture and therefore a functional composition.



The table has its own story. It is certainly not the table of the meeting-room. Hardly is there enough place available for the minute book, the inkstand, and the money bag of the treasurer. There is no place left for the note-books, documents, etc. of the other members. Rembrandt preferred this little table, in the first place, because he wanted to seat a member of the board on each of the short sides; in the second place, because the table's principal function was for him to bring color into the interior. For this purpose the table was moved as far as possible from the wall with the window, in order to bring the only illuminated small side to the middle of the scene. Only the small side could catch the full day light, since the surface of the table was invisible as it was above the line of the observers' eyes. The low perspective was conditioned by the wooden dais which in the main floor of Dutch houses was necessary to protect the occupants against the cold of the flag-stones. The red of the table rug was there not so much to break the monotony of the black, white, and brown, nor to embellish the dead achromatism of the rest, it was not a decorative, aesthetic element, but the red had a purpose. The picture would be less effective, if Rembrandt had used a green or a blue. Green is reposeful, blue is centripetal, red is aggressive, violent. It makes the syndics active, it underscores their hard, rugged attitude toward life, it illustrates their lust of power. We have only to take a color reproduction and change the red into green or blue, and the syndics look like unloaded guns. The red heightens the tension, the briskness of the discussion. The red is here, thus, functional.

Before concluding this book I want to answer the following question: Is there a relation between the geometrical patterns of Rembrandt's compositions and the *mos geometricus* of

Spinoza's *Ethica*? I should think, no! The answer becomes at once clear, if we put the problem in the algebra of relations of Whitehead-Russell.¹⁹¹ The formula is:

$$X R Y \rightarrow R (X Y)$$

R denotes the dyadic relation. X and Y are the arguments which stand in the relation denoted by R.

For the sake of elucidation, I advance two examples, before coming to the problem in question itself.

If X stands for Spinoza's philosophy; for Rembrandt's portrait painting, and R for actions and passions of man, then the definition will confirm at first sight that the relation (R) is correct, because Spinoza's philosophy and Rembrandt's portrait painting have the same object: the actions and passions of man, with which Spinoza as a philosopher deals in abstracto, and Rembrandt as a painter in concreto.

Another example. If X stands for Spinoza's literary style (vocabulary, syntax, etc.), and Y for Rembrandt's style (colors, forms, compositions), then R denoting the intrinsicity and functionalism of the form, is undeniable.

But now our problem. If X should mean the deductive procedure used by Spinoza for the presentation of his ideas, and Y the method used by Rembrandt for the visualization of his visions, then there can be no doubt that R becomes $\neg R$ (= no relation).

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SPINOZA

- SPINOZA: *Tractatus (brevis) de deo et homine eiusque felicitate*, 1660.
- SPINOZA: *Renati des Cartes Principiorum philosophiae pars I, & II more geometrico demonstratae per Benedictum de Spinoza. Accesserunt ejusdem Cogitata metaphysica, in quibus difficiliore, quae tam in parte metaphysices generali, quam speciali occurrunt, quaestiones breviter explicantur*, Amsterdam, 1663.
- SPINOZA: *Tractatus theologico-politicus*, 1670.
- SPINOZA: *Opera posthuma: Ethica more geometrico demonstrata; Tractatus politicus; De intellectus emendatione*, Amsterdam, 1677.
- SPINOZA: Cf. *The Correspondence of Spinoza*, London, 1928, edited by A. Wolf.
-
- JEAN MAXIMILIEN LUCAS (1636?-1697): *Das Leben und der Geist des Herrn Benedict de Spinoza*, Cf. A. Wolf: *The oldest Biography of Spinoza*, New York, 1927.
- COLERUS (d. 1707), Cf. Frederick Pollock: *Spinoza: his Life and Philosophy*, London-New York, 1899; Appendix: *The Life of Spinoza by Colerus*, p. 383-418.
- JEAN LE CLERC (1657-1736): *Bibliothèque ancienne et moderne*, Amsterdam, 1714-1730.
- K. O. MEINSMA: *Spinoza en zijn kring*, the Hague, 1876.
- T. CAMMERER: *Die Lehre Spinozas*, Stuttgart, 1877.
- F. CAIRD: *Spinoza*, London, 1886.
- BALTZER: *Spinozas Entwicklungsgang*, Kiel, 1888.
- VAN VLOTEN AND LAND: *Opera omnia*, the Hague, 1895.
- KUNO FISCHER: *Spinozas Leben, Werke und Lehre*, Heidelberg, 1898.
- LEOPOLD: *Ad Spinozae opera posthuma*, the Hague, 1902.
- P. P. COUCHOUD: *B. de Espinoza*, Paris, 1902.
- J. FREUDENTHAL: *Das Leben Spinozas*, Stuttgart, 1904.
- A. WENZEL: *Die Weltanschauung Spinozas*, Berlin, 1907.
- ANNA TUMARKIN: *Spinoza*, Leipzig, 1908.
- STANISLAUS VON DUNIN-BORKOWSKI: *I. Der junge De Spinoza, Leben und Werdegang im Lichte der Weltphilosophie*, Munster i.W., 1910.
- CARL GEBHARDT: *Spinoza, Lebensbeschreibung und Gespräche*, Leipzig, 1914.
- ANDRÉ-CHARLES COPPIER: "Rembrandt et Spinoza" in *Revue des deux mondes*, Paris, 1916, vol. 31, p. 160.

- G. STUMPF: *Spinozastudien*, Berlin, 1919.
- C. GEBHARDT: *Spinozas sämtliche Werke*, Leipzig, 1922.
- CARL GEBHARDT: "Rembrandt und Spinoza. Stilgeschichtliche Betrachtungen zum Barock-Problem" in *Kant-Studien*, 1927, vol. XXXII, p. 161.
- FRANZ ERHARDT: *Die Weltanschauung Spinozas*, Stuttgart, 1928.
- ANTOON VLOEMANS: *Spinoza. De Mensch, het Leven en het Werk*, the Hague, 1931.
- STANISLAUS VON DUNIN-BORKOWSKI: *II. Aus den Tagen Spinozas*, Munster i.W., 1933.
- HARRY AUSTRYN WOLFSON: *The Philosophy of Spinoza*, Cambridge, Mass., 1934.
- STANISLAUS VON DUNIN-BORKOWSKI: *III. Aus den Tagen Spinozas*, Munster i.W., 1935.
- STANISLAUS VON DUNIN-BORKOWSKI: *IV. Aus den Tagen Spinozas*, Munster i.W., 1936.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF REMBRANDT

- CONSTANTIJN HUYGENS: *Autobiographie* (1629-1631), published by A. Worp in *Oud-Holland*, vol. IX, 1891
- JOACHIM VON SANDRART: *Teutsche Academie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey Künste*. Nuremberg, 1675
- SAMUEL VAN HOOGSTRAETEN: *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst*, Rotterdam, 1678
- ANDRÉ FÉLIBIEN: *Entretiens sur les vies et sur les ouvrages des plus excellens peintres anciens et modernes*, Paris, 1685
- FILIPPO BALDINUCCI: *Cominciamento e progresso dell'arte d'intagliare in rame colla vita de' piu eccellenti maestri della stessa professione*, Florence, 1686
- F. LE COMTE: *Cabinet des Singularitez*, Paris, 1699, vol. III
- ROGER DES PILES: *Abrégé de la Vie des Peintres*, Paris, 1699
- ARNOLD HOUBRAEKEN: *De groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*, Amsterdam, 1717-1719
- GÉRARD DE LAIRESSE: *Groot-Schilderboek der nederlantsche Konstschilders en schilderessen*, Amsterdam 1718, vol. I
- A. BARTSCH: *Catalogue raisonné*, Vienna, 1797
- ÉMILE MICHEL: *Rembrandt*, Paris, 1892
- W. BODE & CH. SEDELMAYER: *Rembrandt. Catalogue illustré de son oeuvre*, Paris, 1897 et seq.
- C. NEUMANN: *Rembrandt*, Stuttgart, 1905

- C. HOFSTEDE DE GROOT: *Die Urkunden über Rembrandt*, the Hague, 1906
- C. HOFSTEDE DE GROOT: *Die Handzeichnungen Rembrandts*, Harlem, 1906
- C. HOFSTEDE DE GROOT: *Rembrandt Bijbel*, Amsterdam, 1906
- F. LIPPMANN & C. HOFSTEDE DE GROOT: *Zeichnungen von Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn*, the Hague, 1911
- F. SCHMIDT-DEGENER: "Het genetische probleem van de Nachtwacht" in *Onze Kunst*, 1914-1917
- F. SCHMIDT-DEGENER: "Het lot der naetureelste beweegelijkheid" in *De Gids*, 1915, II, p. 334
- G. PAULI: *Zeichnungen alter Meister in der Kunsthalle zu Bremen*, Frankfort, 1914
- ANDRÉ-CHARLES COPPIER: "Rembrandt et Spinoza" in *Revue des deux mondes*, Paris, 1916, vol. XXXI, p. 160
- A. M. HIND: *A Catalogue of Rembrandt's Etchings*, London, 1923
- G. PAULI: *Zeichnungen in der Kunsthalle zu Hamburg*, Frankfort, 1924-1926
- GEORG SIMMEL: *Rembrandt. Ein kunstphilosophischer Versuch*, Munich, 1925
- W. VALENTINER: *Rembrandt's Handzeichnungen*, 1925-1934
- WEISBACH: *Rembrandt*, Berlin, 1926
- CARL GEBHARDT: "Rembrandt und Spinoza. Stilgeschichtliche Betrachtungen zum Barock-Problem" in *Kant-Studien*, 1927, vol. XXXII, p. 161
- F. SCHMIDT-DEGENER: *Rembrandt und der holländische Barock*, Berlin, 1928
- JACOB ROSENBERG: *Rembrandt*, Cambridge, Mass., 1948

FOOTNOTES

1. Henri Pirenne: *Mohammed and Charlemagne*, New York, 1939, p. 180
2. Leo Balet: *Die Verbürgerlichung der deutschen Kunst, Literatur und Musik im 18. Jahrhundert*, Strasbourg, 1936
3. Leo Balet l.c.
4. Heinrich Wölfflin: *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, Munich, 1918
5. Philipp Spitta: *Joh. Seb. Bach*, Leipzig, 1921, v. II.
6. Roger de Piles: *Abrégé de la Vie des Peintres*, Paris, 1699
7. Leo Balet: *Die Verbürgerlichung der deutschen Kunst, Literatur und Musik im 18. Jahrhundert*, Strasbourg, 1936
8. Felix Rachfahl: *Wilhelm von Oranien und der Niederländische Aufstand*, Halle a.d. Saale, 1906, vol. II, p. 52
9. J. G. de Hoop Scheffer: *Geschiedenis der Kerkhervorming in Nederland van haar ontstaan tot 1531*, Amsterdam, 1873, p. 24
10. J. G. de Hoop Scheffer: l.c., p. 19
11. Emanuel van Meteren: *Historien der Nederlanden*, Danswyck, 1609, fol. 10
12. J. G. de Hoop Scheffer: l.c., p. 51
13. J. G. de Hoop Scheffer: l.c., p. 559
14. J. G. de Hoop Scheffer: l.c., p. 18
15. J. G. de Hoop Scheffer: l.c., p. 202
16. J. G. de Hoop Scheffer: l.c., p. 158
17. J. G. de Hoop Scheffer: l.c., p. 18
18. H. Blink: *Opkomst en ontwikkeling van den boerenstand in Nederland*, Amsterdam, 1914, p. 289
19. J. G. de Hoop Scheffer: l.c.
20. *Adhortatio ad seriam poenitentiam et ardentis preces*, Antwerp, 1566, Art. XXI
21. *Confessie oft Bekentenisse der Dienaren Jesu Christi in de Kircke binnen Antwerpen die welke der Confessie van Augsburg toegedaen is.*
22. J. W. Pont: *Geschiedenis van het Lutheranisme in de Nederlanden tot 1608*, Harlem, 1911, p. 87
23. J. W. Pont, l.c., p. 89
24. W. J. Kühler: *Geschiedenis der Nederlandsche Doopsgezinden in de zestiende eeuw*, Harlem, 1932, p. 3
25. J. C. Naber: *Calvinist of Libertijnsch?* Utrecht, 1884
G. J. Vos: *Amstels Kerkelijk leven van de eerste zestig jaren der Vrijheid*, Amsterdam, 1903

- L. Knappert: *Geschiedenis der Hervormde Kerk onder de Republiek en het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden*, Amsterdam, 1911
- Interesting in this context is the polemic of Max Weber and Sombart: Weber: "Die protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus," in *Archiv für Sozialforschung und Sozialpolitik*, 1905, v. XXI, p. 1
- Sombart: *Der Bourgeois*, Munich and Leipzig, 1913, Ch. 20
26. P. J. Blok: *Geschiedenis eener Hollandsche stad. I. Eene Hollandsche stad in de Middeleeuwen*, 1893, Preface.
 27. Plancius: *De Constantia libri duo, qui alloquium praecipue continent in Publicis malis*, Leyden, 1584, Ch. VIII
 28. P. Groen van Prinsterer: *Archives ou Correspondance inédite de la Maison d'Orange*, Leyden, 1835, vol. II, p. 28
 29. Felix Rachfahl: *Wilhelm von Oranien und der Niederländische Aufstand*, Halle o.S., 1906, vol. I, p. 100
 30. P. Groen van Prinsterer: 1.c., vol. I, p. 63
 31. P. Groen van Prinsterer: 1.c., vol. I, p. 72
 32. Felix Rachfahl: 1.c., II, p. 631
 33. P. Groen van Prinsterer: 1.c., III, p. 100
 34. *Mémoires de Walsingham*, p. 143 in P. Groen van Prinsterer, 1.c. vol. III, p. 404
 35. P. Groen van Prinsterer: 1.c., vol. IV, p. 44
 36. Peter Chrisihanense Bor: *vorsprongk, begin en verolgh der Nederlandsche oorlagen*, Amsterdam 1679-1684, p. 651, 661
 37. P. J. Blok: *Geschichte der Niederlande*, Gotha, 1902, III, p. 349
 38. P. Groen van Prinsterer: 1.c., IV, p. 88
 39. P. Groen van Prinsterer: 1.c., IV, p. 228
 40. P. Groen van Prinsterer: 1.c., VIII, j. 188. Cf. *Résolutions de Hollande*, 1583, p. 79
 41. P. Groen van Prinsterer: 1.c., III, p. 137
 42. Hugo Grotius: *Parallelon Rerum publicarum liber tertius: De Moribus ingenioque populorum Athenensium, Romanorum, Batavorum*, finished in 1604, ed. by Johan Meerman, Harlem, 1803, Ch. XVI
 43. Ernst Baasch: *Holländische Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, Jena, 1927, p. 142
 44. Walter Raleigh: *Observations Touching Trade and Commerce with the Hollanders and other Nations*, London, 1604-1616.
 45. Etienne Laspeyres: *Geschichte der volkswirtschaftlichen Anschauungen der Niederländer und ihrer Literatur zur Zeit der Republik*, Leipzig, 1863
 46. Otto Pringsheim: *Beiträge zur wirtschaftlichen Entwicklungsgeschichte der vereinigten Niederlande im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, Leipzig, 1890
 - Ernst Baasch: *Holländische Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, Jena, 1927
 46. R. Fruin: Tien jaren
 47. L. Knappert: *Geschiedenis der Hervormde Kerk onder de Republiek en het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden*, Amsterdam, 1911, p. 160
 48. L. Knappert: 1.c., p. 168
 49. François Valentijn: *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indien*, the Hague, 1856

- 50 L. Knappert: 1.c., p. 220
51. H. Brugmans: "Handel en Nijverheid" in *Amsterdam in de zeventiende eeuw*, the Hague, 1897, II p. 189
52. Hugo de Groot: *Nederlandtsche Jaerboeken en Historien*, Amsterdam, 1681
53. Pieter de la Court: *Politike Discoursen handlende in Ses onderscheide Boeken van Steeden, Landen, Oorlogen, Kerken, Regeeringen, en Zeeden*, Amsterdam, 1662, p. 187
54. Pieter de la Court: *Consideratien van Staat Ofte Politike Weeg-Schaal*, Amsterdam, 1662, p. 347
55. Otto Pringsheim: *Beiträge zur wirtschaftlichen Entwicklungsgeschichte der vereinigten Niederlande im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, Leipzig, 1890, p. 68
56. Pieter de la Court: 1.c., p. 283, 563
57. G. W. Kernkamp: "Regeering en Historie" in *Amsterdam in de zeventiende eeuw*, the Hague, 1897, p. 112
58. G. W. Kernkamp, 1.c., p. 157
59. P. J. Blok: *Geschichte der Niederlande*, Gotha, 1902
I. H. Gosses and N. Japikse: *Handboek tot de Staatskundige Geschiedenis van Nederland*, the Hague, 1920
60. Hugo de Groot: *Parallelon Rerum publicarum liber tertius: De Moribus ingenioque populorum Athenensium, Romanorum, Batavorum*, 1604
61. Hugo de Groot: *Nederlandtsche Jaerboeken en Historien*, Amsterdam, 1681, p. 106
62. Graswinckel: *De potestate ordinum Hollandiae*
Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn: *Institutiones politicae*
Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn: *Commentariodius de statu foederatarum provinciarum Belgii*.
63. P. L. Muller: *Onze Gouden Eeuw*, Leyden, 1896, p. 319
Muller writes there: In the seventeenth century "Professors of Leyden stuffed with ancient Languages declared Spinoza to be half-baked. This proves [!] that Spinoza, so to say, stood beyond life." Could it be that these "stuffed professors" were standing beyond life? Muller continues: "Spinoza had as good as no importance for the Dutch science of these days. He stood outside of it, and he was, if at all, a child of his century, for sure no child of our country, he was a cosmopolite, who was born and lived in our country, but who could just as well have been born elsewhere. . . . During the seventeenth century no Netherlander has deserved a reputation as a philosopher, but Spinoza alone, and this man, could scarcely be held for a Netherlander, in view of the fact that he was a Jew." No comment!
64. Carl Gebhardt: "Rembrandt und Spinoza." "Stilgeschichtliche Betrachtungen zum Barock-Problem" in *Kant-Studien*, 1927, vol. XXXII, p. 161
65. Pieter de la Court: *Consideratien van Staat Ofte Politike Weegschael*, Amsterdam, 1662, p. 565

66. B. M. Telders: "De oorsprong van het leerstuk der territoriale zee" in *De Gids*, 1937, No. 6, p. 301
67. Johan G. Elias: *Geschiedenis van het Amsterdamsche Regentenpatriciaat*, the Hague, 1923, p. 32
68. d'Estrades: *Lettres et négociations du Comte d'Estrades*, London, 1743, vol. I
69. O. van Rees: *Geschiedenis der Staathuishoudkunde in Nederland tot het einde der achttiende eeuw*, Utrecht, 1865, p. 242
70. Elias Luzac: *Hollands Rijkdom*, Leyden, 1780-1782, vol. III, p. 3, 356
71. O. van Rees: l.c., p. 384, 401, 429
72. Otto Klye: *Kort verhael van Nieuw Nederlants Gelegenheyt, Degthden, Naturelyke Voorrechten en byzondere bequaemheidt ter bevolkingh*
P. C. Godée Molsbergen: *Jan van Diebeeck en zijn tijd*, Amsterdam, 1937, p. 91
O. van Rees: l.c., p. 321
73. L. Knappert: *Geschiedenis der Hervormde Kerk onder de Republiek en het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden*, Amsterdam, 1911, p. 217
74. J. G. Elias: *Geschiedenis van het Amsterdamsche Regentenpatriciaat*, the Hague, 1923, p. 94
75. J. G. Elias: l.c., p. 117
76. J. G. Elias: l.c., p. 110, 113
77. Otto Pringsheim: *Beiträge zur wirtschaftlichen Entwicklungsgeschichte der vereinigten Niederlande im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, Leipzig, 1890, p. 15
78. d'Estrades: *Lettres et négociations du Comte d'Estrades*, London, 1743, vol. I, p. 28
79. O. van Rees: *Geschiedenis der Staathuishoudkunde in Nederland tot het einde der achttiende eeuw*, Utrecht, 1865, p. 188
80. J. G. Elias *De Vlootbouw in Nederland in de eerste helft der 17^e eeuw, 1596-1655*, Amsterdam, 1933, p. 88
81. Ernst Baasch: *Holländische Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, Jena, 1927, p. 17
82. G. D. J. Schotel: *Het maatschappelijk Leven onzer Vaderen in de zeventiende eeuw*, Leyden, 1905, p. 307
M. Balen: *Daglijsten of Gedenckboeck*, 1676
83. Hugo de Groot: *Paralleion Rerum republicanum liber tertius*, Harlem, 1803, Ch. IX
84. W. P. C. Knuttel: *De toestand der Nederlandsche Katholieken, ten tijde der Republiek*, the Hague, 1892, p. 13
85. G. W. Kernkamp: "Regeering in Historie" in *Amsterdam in de zeventiende eeuw*, 1897, p. 56
86. G. W. Kernkamp: *De regeeringe van Amsterdam zoo in't civiel als crimineel en militaire 1653-1672 ontworpen door Hans Bontemantel*
87. G. D. J. Schotel: *Het maatschappelijk Leven onzer Vaderen in de zeventiende eeuw*, Leyden, 1905, p. 308
88. G. D. J. Schotel: l.c., p. 307

89. Otto Pringsheim: *Beiträge zur wirtschaftlichen Entwicklungsgeschichte der vereinigten Niederlande im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, Leipzig, 1880, p. 3
90. Mr. D . . . : *Over de aloude vrijheid van handel en nijverheid*, 1840, p. 250, 252, 293
91. G. W. Kernkamp: "Regeering in Historie" in *Amsterdam in de zeventiende eeuw*, the Hague, 1897, p. 94
92. J. G. Elias: *Geschiedenis van het Amsterdamsche Regentenpatriciaat*, the Hague, 1923, p. 39
93. O. van Rees: *Geschiedenis der Staathuishoudkunde in Nederland tot het einde der achttiende eeuw*, Utrecht, 1865, p. 146
94. P. C. Godée Molsbergen: *Jan van Riebeeck en zijn tijd*, Amsterdam 1937, p. 69
95. H. T. Colenbrander: *Jan Pietersz. Coen*, the Hague, 1934, p. 195
96. Brugmans: *Amsterdam in de zeventiende eeuw*, the Hague, 1897, p. 206
97. P. C. Godée Molsbergen: *Jan van Riebeeck en zijn tijd*, Amsterdam, 1937, p. 37
98. P. C. Godée Molsbergen: l.c., p. 67
99. H. T. Colenbrander, *Jan Pietersz. Coen*, the Hague, 1934, p. 256
100. C. D. Busken Huet: *Het land van Rembrandt*, Harlem, 1886, II, p. 205
101. Ernst Baasch: *Holländische Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, Jena, 1927, p. 380
102. André-Charles Coppier: "Rembrandt et Spinoza" in *Revue des deux mondes*, Paris, vol. 31, p. 160
103. Carl Gebhardt: "Rembrandt und Spinoza. Stilgeschichtliche Betrachtungen zum Barock-Problem" in *Kant-Studien*, vol. XXXII, p. 161
104. Stanislaus von Dunin-Borkowski: *Der junge de Spinoza Leben und Werdegang im Lichte der Weltphilosophie*, Munster i.W., 1910, p. XIX
105. Spinoza: *Tractatus de intellectus emendatione*, III, 17, I
Spinoza: *Ethica*, II, 17, Note
106. Pieter de la Court: *Politike Discoursen handelende in Ses onderscheide Boeken van Steeden, Landen, Oorlogen, Kerken, Regeeringen, en Zeeden*, Amsterdam, 1662, p. 99
107. Jan Maximilien Lucas: *Das Leben und der Geist des Herrn Benedict de Spinoza*, quoted by Carl Gebhardt's *Spinoza, Lebensbeschreibung und Gespräche*, Leipzig, 1914
A. Wolf: *The oldest Biography of Spinoza*, New York, 1927
108. Spinoza *Ethica*, IV, 18, Note
109. Spinoza: *Letters*, No. 22
110. Franz Erhardt.: *Die Weltanschauung Spinozas*, Stuttgart, 1928, p. 140
111. Spinoza: *Ethica*, III, 29, Note
112. Spinoza: l.c., IV, 70
113. Spinoza: l.c., IV, 71
114. Spinoza: l.c., IV, 66, Note
115. Bertrand Russell: *A History of Western Philosophy*, New York, 1945, p. 569, 582
116. Christian Kortholt: *Detribus Impostoribus Magnis (Herbert, Hobbes, Spinoza) liber*, Kiloni, 1680

117. Spinoza: *Ethica*, IV, 67
118. Spinoza: l.c., II, 48, Note
119. Spinoza: l.c., II, 49
120. Spinoza: l.c., II, 13, Note
121. Franz Erhardt: *Die Weltanschauung Spinozas*, Stuttgart, 1928, p. 109
122. Spinoza: *Ethica*, V, 39
123. Spinoza: l.c., II, 7, Note
124. Spinoza: l.c., III, 2, Note
125. Franz Erhardt: *Die Weltanschauung Spinozas*, Stuttgart, 1928, p. 5
126. Spinoza: *Ethica*, II, 11
127. Spinoza: *Ethica*, II, Def. 3
128. Ledgerwood: *Dictionary of Philosophy*, New York, 1942, p. 198
129. Bertrand Russell: *Scientific Outlook*, New York, 1931, p. 124
130. Spinoza: *Ethica*, V, 29, Note
131. Otto Baansch: *Baruch de Spinozas Ethik*, Leipzig, 1922, p. XVII
132. Spinoza: *Ethica*, V, 42, Note
133. Mersenne: *Quaestiones celeberrimae in Genesim*, Paris, 1623, p. 67
134. Mersenne: *L'impiété des Deistes et des plus civils Libertins découverte et réfutée par raisons de Théologie, et de Philosophie*, Paris, 1625
135. Tholossanus: *Syntaxis artis mirabilis*
136. Hardouin: *Opera varia*
137. Tholuck: *Vorgeschichte des Rationalismus*, vol. I, 1, p. 276, 324, footnote 278 (Ms. in Staatsarchiv at Bern)
138. Pierre Baille: *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique*, Paris 1695/1697
139. Pierre Baille: *Pensées sur la Comète de l'année 1680*, Paris, 1681
140. Novalis: *Fragmente vermischten Inhalts*, Jena, 1907
141. Leclerc: *Bibliothek antiker und moderner Schriftsteller*
142. Spinoza: *Ethica*, II, 2
143. Spinoza: *Tractatus brevis*, I, 31
144. Spinoza: *Ethica*, I, 17, Note
145. Spinoza: l.c., II, 40, Note 2
146. Bertrand Russell: *A History of Western Philosophy*, New York, 1945, p. 798
147. Albert Einstein: *Cosmic Religion*, New York, 1931, p. 97
148. Einstein: l.c., p. 106
149. Einstein: l.c., p. 98
150. Einstein: l.c., p.99
151. Albert Einstein and Leopold Infeld: *The Evolution of Physics*, New York, 1938, p. 310
152. B. van der Sigtenhorst Meyer: *Jan P. Sweelinck en zijn instrumentale muziek*, the Hague, 1934
153. W. Martin: *De Hollandsche Schilderkunst van de zeventiende eeuw*, Amsterdam, 1936
154. Albrecht Dürer: *Vier Bücher von menschlicher Proportion*, Nuremberg, 1528, translated into Latin and published in 1532, under the title: *De symmetria partium*.

155. W. Martin: *De Hollandsche Schilderkunst van de zeventiende eeuw*, Amsterdam, 1936, p.
156. Carel van Mander: *Het Leven der doorluchtighe Nederlandtsche en Hoogduytsche Schilders*, Alckmaer, 1604
157. G. Kalf: *Geschiedenis der Nederlandsche Letterkunde*, Groningen, 1907, p. 489
158. C. D. Busken-Huet: *Het land van Rembrandt*, Harlem, 1886, I, p. 388
159. Arnold Houbraeken: *De groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konst-schilders en Schilderessen*, Amsterdam, 1717-1719, p. 270
160. G. Bredero: "Nieuw Liedeken" in *Boertige Liederen*
161. Cornelius de Bie: *Het Gulden Cabinet van de edele vrij Schilder-Const*, Lier, 161, p. 94
162. Arnold Houbraeken: *De groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konst-schilders en Schilderessen*, Amsterdam, 1717-1719, p. 348
163. . . . : *The Dutch drawn to the Life*, London, 1664, Cf. G. Kalf: "Huiselijk en Maatschappelijk Leven" in *Amsterdam in de zeventiende eeuw*, the Hague, 1897
164. G. Kalf: *Geschiedenis der Nederlantsche Letterkunde*, Groningen, 1907, p. 152
165. G. Bredero: *Boertigh, Amoureuus en Aendachtigh Groot Lied-Boeck*, 1622
166. Franz Landsberger: *Rembrandt, the Jews and the Bible*, Philadelphia, 1946
167. Filippo Baldinucci: *Cominciamento e progresso dell' arte d'intagliare in rame colla vita de piu eccellenti maestri della stessa professione*, Florence, 1686
168. Manasse-ben-Israel: *Piedra Gloriosa; o De la Estatua de Nebuchadnesar*, Amsterdam, 1654
169. André-Charles Coppier: "Rembrandt et Spinoza" in *Revue des deux mondes*, Paris, 1916, vol. 31, p. 160
170. Samuel van Hoogstraeten: *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilder-konst*, Rotterdam, 1678
171. Jan Huizinga: *Holländische Kultur des siebzehnten Jahrhunderts*, Jena, 1933, p. 31
172. P. J. Blok: *Geschiedenis eener Hollandsche Stad. III. Eene Hollandsche Stad onder de Republiek*, the Hague, 1916, p. 274
173. Willi Drost: *Barockmalerei in den Germanischen Ländern*, Wildpark-Potsdam, 1926, p. 154
174. Adolf Philippi: *Die Blüte der Malerei in Holland*, Leipzig and Berlin, 1901, p. 128
175. André Michel, *Rembrandt*, Paris, 1893
176. Samuel van Hoogstraeten: *Inleyding tot de Hooge School der Schilder-konst*, Rotterdam, 1678, p. 183
177. C. Hofstede de Groot: *Die Urkunden über Rembrandt*, the Hague, 1906
178. F. Schmidt-Degener: "Het lot der naetureelste beweegelijkheid" in *De Gids*, 1915, II, p. 334*

* No art historian has written so much nonsense about Rembrandt as the

former Director of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, F. Schmidt-Degener. In his article in *De Gids*, he calls Rembrandt a "baroque" painter who "developed backward over a period of romanticism into a Renaissance artist." In the Preface of his *Catalogue* of the Rembrandt Exhibition at Amsterdam in 1935, he put the lid on the Rembrandt top, by proclaiming that the Dutch master was, in addition to all this, a "Gothic" artist because of his "Pre-Renaissance Christianity," and at the same time a "realist" and an "idealist."

179. Samuel van Hoogstraeten: *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst*, Rotterdam, 1678, p. 75
180. Arnold Houbraeken: *De groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*, Amsterdam, 1717-1719, p. 270
181. Samuel van Hoogstraeten: *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst*, Rotterdam, 1678, p. 117
182. Joachim von Sandrart: *Teutsche Academie der Bau-Bild, und Mahlerey Künste*, Nuremberg, 1657, p. 326
183. Carl Neumann: *Rembrandt*, Munich, 1922, p. 192
184. Henri Focillon: *The Life of Forms in Art*, New Haven, 1948
185. Joachim von Sandrart: *Teutsche Academie der Bau-Bild, und Mahlerey Künste*, Nuremberg, 1657, p. 327
186. Joshua Reynolds: *Tour in Holland*, 1781
187. Meyer, in *Oud Holland*, 1886, IV, p. 204
C. Hofstede de Groot: *Die Urkunden über Rembrandt*, the Hague, 1906, p. 74, note 48
188. Carl Neumann: *Rembrandt*, Munich, 1922, p. 310
189. Joachim von Sandrart: *Teutsche Academie der Bau-Bild, und Mahlerey Künste*, Nuremberg, 1657, p. 21
190. Arnold Houbraeken: *De groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*, Amsterdam, 1711-1719, p. 28
191. Whitehead-Russell: *Principia Mathematica*, Cambridge, (Engl.), 1910-1913
192. Bertrand Russell: *Scientific Outlook*, New York, 1931, p. 124
193. Albert Einstein: *Cosmic Religion*, New York, 1931
194. Maurice Merleau-Ponty: *La Structure du comportement*, Paris, 1942
Maurice Merleau-Ponty: *Phénoménologie de la perception*, Paris, 1945
195. James Jeans: *Physics and Philosophy*, Cambridge and New York, 1943, p. 205

NOV 20 1981		
1-15-82		
MAY 22 1984		
FEB 06 1987		
APR 09 2000		
APR 20 2000		
NOV 12 2005		
NOV 24 2015		
GAYLORD		PRINTED IN U.S.A.

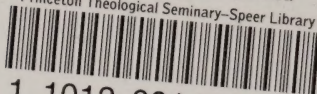
GAYLORD

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

ND653 .R4B2

Rembrandt and Spinoza / by Leo Balet.

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 00142 9440